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The Free Church of Scotland and the Territorial Ideal, 1843-1900

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ABSTRACT

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The Free Church of Scotland's home-mission campaign played a major role in the Church's attempt to define itself as the true national Church of Scotland following the Disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843. It also represented the Free Church's effort to confront the problems of irreligion and social degradation which accompanied industrialisation and urbanisation.

The study begins with the contribution of Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847). As a Church of Scotland minister in Glasgow between 1815 and 1823, Chalmers endeavoured to make the parish the focal point for the local community. Chalmers was supported in his ministry by a large voluntary agency which visited local residents and encouraged self-help and communal responsibility. He created a system of day and Sunday schools, and sought to reform the system of poor relief. The aim was to create self-reliant district communities, through what was termed the 'territorial plan'. This thesis argues that Chalmers' posthumous contribution to home-mission work, through his writings on the territorial plan and missionary work in Glasgow and Edinburgh, profoundly influenced the social outreach of all the Presbyterian Churches, and especially the Free Church, in nineteenth-century Scotland.

Territorialism gave the Presbyterian Churches a valuable link to those groups in society which had been adversely affected by urbanisation and industrialisation. The thesis also considers how the home-mission movement in Scotland was influenced by external forces such as political, social and economic developments as well as religious matters such as theological controversies, Church union negotiations and a growing disestablishment campaign. This thesis demonstrates how the Free Church's territorial campaign was a fundamental aspect of its commitment to an essentially new, predominantly urban society.

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In memory of my Gran

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"With a Chalmers in every British parish much might be possible!
But, alas! what assurance is there that in any one British parish
there will ever be another?"[1]

Introduction

These words were written in 1841 by Thomas Carlyle, arguably Scotland's most distinguished Victorian man of letters, in a letter to Thomas Chalmers, who could lay a similar claim to being Scotland's most important Victorian minister. Carlyle's words reflected his concern over Chalmers' wholehearted commitment to the idea of the parish system as a means to bring about both spiritual and social renewal. Whereas Chalmers felt that a successful, nationwide system of parish churches would place the Church of Scotland at the centre of Scottish life, Carlyle, like others, believed that such a system could not succeed without talented, energetic and exceptional ministers like Chalmers. This kind of debate over the value of the parish system would continue long after Chalmers died in 1847. Although a great deal of historical research has been directed at Chalmers' belief in the parish system and involvement in mission work and church extension in the first half of the nineteenth century, his posthumous contribution to the parish system, mission work and church extension in the second half of the nineteenth century has been largely neglected. This thesis will concentrate on these issues as the Churches in Scotland, and the Free Church of Scotland in particular, tried to assert their influence in an industrialising economy and among a predominantly urbanised population.

Thomas Chalmers had tried to revive the parish system as a means of helping the Established Church meet the unprecedented needs placed upon it in the first half of the nineteenth century. The idea of a parish, or some equivalent term to describe the area around a church, was first introduced in Scotland when

[1] W. Hanna, *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. iv, (Edinburgh,1852), pp.199-201.

teinds, a tenth of produce given to support the clergy, were made payable to monasteries and cathedrals in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It was not until after the Reformation, however, that a genuine attempt was made to establish a nationwide system of parish churches. John Knox, Scotland's leading reformer, felt that every parish should have an educated minister as well as some kind of provision for the poor and education for children. This parish ideal found expression in *The First Book of Discipline* of 1560. In a wider sense, Knox hoped that civil and ecclesiastical authorities could cooperate in Scotland in order to establish a 'true religion' and also work together to exclude any alternative creeds. The Reformed Church never received the funds of the old Roman Catholic Church, however, which meant that the parish system was never fully implemented to the extent Knox would have liked.[2]

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, changes in agriculture and industry led to a movement of people out of rural areas into towns with the result that the parish system began to break down in large urban centres. Many ministers were aware of this problem, but none proved quite so determined to remedy it as Thomas Chalmers. Having been convinced of the effectiveness of the parish system during his youth in Fife, Chalmers introduced in the 1820s and 1840s an aggressive territorial mission system in both Glasgow and Edinburgh in an effort to tackle the combination of social dislocation and religious indifference which he identified as all too common in large towns and cities. The term territorial was closely linked to the idea of a parish. Chalmers wanted each congregation to conduct mission work within a well defined area. It was this aspect which would determine whether a congregation was territorial. Chalmers' vision of aggressive mission work, however, did not mean that people were physically forced to attend church. It simply meant that a minister and his congregational agency would regularly visit and encourage non-

2 A.I. Dunlop, 'Parish System', in N. Cameron (ed.), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh,1993), p.644.

churchgoers within their allotted territory to attend the local church. This was in contrast to most churches in urban areas which Chalmers felt operated on the attractive principle. Instead of trying to find new recruits, attractive churches hoped that people would find their own way to the church without having to be encouraged by either a minister or a congregational agency. With a church, school and kirk-session in each parish, overseen by an aggressive minister and voluntary agency, Chalmers felt that the Established Church had the means to bring about spiritual renewal and also to regulate urban life in the way which it was felt the Church had been able to do in rural areas. In his time at both the Tron and St. John's parishes of Glasgow between 1815-1823, local residents were given priority in pastoral visiting over the city's wealthy inhabitants who were attracted to Chalmers' preaching. Seats in Glasgow's churches at the time were rented by Glasgow's Town Council and it was therefore impossible for Chalmers to restrict entrance at either the Tron or St. John's churches to parish inhabitants. Nevertheless, at St. John's, Chalmers introduced a special evening service for parish residents and also established a chapel-of-ease for the exclusive use of his parishioners. Other responsibilities such as poor relief, visitation and education which often overwhelmed a minister were assigned to deacons, elders and day and sabbath school teachers after Chalmers had subdivided the district into manageable proportions. The office of deacon had largely fallen into disuse before Chalmers arrived in Glasgow. Chalmers was quick to recognise their potential, however, as valuable auxiliaries to the efforts of an energetic minister. By encouraging elders and deacons to participate in mission work at both the Tron and St. John's churches, Chalmers managed to generate lay enthusiasm for his territorial ideal in Glasgow.

When Chalmers arrived in Glasgow in 1815, it was clear that the Established Church was struggling to provide for a city which was growing rapidly as Scotland's leading textile centre. In 1815, the Established Church was

responsible for providing only 21,690 church seats in Glasgow when the city's population stood at 120,000.[3] This was unacceptable for a Church which claimed to represent the entire Scottish population. High seat rents, church-door collections and the belief that people should wear Sunday best clothing to church, prevented many ordinary working men and women from attending church. Another problem Chalmers encountered in Glasgow was the lack of urban parish schools. Such schools were widespread in rural areas and were at the centre of Knox's vision of the parish. Parents in Glasgow who wanted their children educated had no choice but to send them to private day schools which were often expensive and of poor quality. Similarly, the Church of Scotland had lost most of its control over poor relief in Glasgow. Church-door collections at parish churches were still spent on poor relief, but the Established Church's relief contribution had been overtaken by the Glasgow Town Hospital, a civic institution funded by a tax on property in the city worth £300 or more, and by the variety of charitable organisations which had been formed in an attempt to do something for Glasgow's needy.[4]

At a time when many people felt that there was little alternative but to introduce a system of assessment-based legal poor relief for the able-bodied poor, Chalmers continued to defend the traditional Scottish system which placed the Established Church at the centre of poor relief provision. According to Chalmers, legal entitlement to poor relief destroyed self-help, the sympathy of friends and family and the generosity of the wealthy.[5] Chalmers' views on poor relief were largely shaped by the Reverend Thomas Malthus. Malthus argued that providing money to the poor increased population growth beyond the capabilities of food production and that this inevitably led to disease, famine and civil strife. Instead of alleviating poverty, Malthus argued that poor relief actually encouraged

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3 S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth* (Oxford,1982), p.97.

4 Ibid., p.98.

5 Ibid., p.117. See T. Chalmers, 'Connexion between the Extension of the Church and the Extinction of Pauperism', *Edinburgh Review,* xxviii (March 17,1817), pp.1-31.

pauperism and social misery. Chalmers became an advocate of Malthus in 1809, but it was not until he had moved to Glasgow that he decided to implement a plan guided by Malthus' teachings. Chalmers hoped to show people that there was an alternative to assessment-based poor relief. At the St. John's church between 1819-1823, Chalmers received permission from Glasgow's authorities to opt out of the city's poor-relief system.[6] Existing paupers continued to receive relief from the church-door collection held at the Sunday morning service. Meanwhile, Chalmers used the collection at the Sunday evening service, which was restricted to parish residents, to pay for any new applicants for poor relief from within his parish. By only giving poor relief as a last resort, Chalmers' plan appeared successful as the cost of relief and the number receiving relief declined. Although his detractors pointed to the callousness by which many deacons conducted the scheme and the large number of donations Chalmers received from outside the parish, he continued to advocate the St. John's system of poor relief until his death.

As far as Chalmers was concerned, his experiment at St. John's had proved a resounding success. Between 1819-1823, more paupers from other parishes moved into St. John's than left the parish, which Chalmers felt showed that the poor received better treatment in St. John's than in other parts of Glasgow. Similarly, Chalmers argued that he had abolished assessment-based poor relief in a largely working-class parish without having aggravated social distress. In particular, Chalmers believed the experiment's success was based on a revival of self-help and communal benevolence among parish residents.

The success of the parish schools was also notable. At St. John's, Chalmers introduced the same system of local sabbath schools that he had first developed at the Tron. Each sabbath school teacher was assigned to one of the twenty-five proportions and told to establish a local sabbath school for the children living in

6 S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, pp.90-151. R.A. Cage and E.O.A. Checkland, 'Thomas Chalmers and Urban Poverty: The St. John's Parish Experiment in Glasgow, 1819-1837', *Philosophical Journal* (Glasgow), xiii (Spring,1976), pp.37-56.

the district. Before long, the St. John's sabbath schools taught 1,039 pupils, or over half the children in the parish between the ages of six and fifteen.[7] Chalmers also established day schools in the parish. Attendance at these schools was restricted to parish residents. Parents were expected to pay for their childrens' education and Chalmers promised that the quality of education would be as good, if not better, than that found in the city's private schools. The first two schools at the MacFarlane St schoolhouse offered an English and a Commercial class and were opened in July 1820. Within a month Chalmers reported that the schools were overcrowded. Consequently, a fund-raising campaign began and another two schoolhouses were opened in September 1821 which also offered an English and a Commercial class. At this stage, the four St. John's parish schools were educating 42% of boys between the ages of six and fifteen.[8] Chalmers had detractors throughout his period in Glasgow, but he had achieved a considerable amount during a short time. In four years at St. John's Chalmers had eliminated assessment-based poor relief, established four parish schools and a comprehensive system of sabbath schools, built a large chapel-of-ease for parish residents and had established a large voluntary agency of deacons, elders and sabbath school teachers. All that remained was for others to follow his example.

Having felt he had shown how an aggressive territorial system could work in Glasgow, Chalmers turned his attention to trying to gain State funding for a church-extension campaign. In 1834, Chalmers became convener of the Church of Scotland's Church Accommodation Committee, later the Church Extension Committee. Chalmers hoped that State funding would enable the Church of Scotland to subdivide parishes and increase its number of churches to such an extent that everybody would have access to religious instruction. In short, Chalmers hoped to finally realise Knox's dream of an efficient national parochial system. In response, the Whig government in 1835 set up a Royal Commission

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7 Ibid., p.136.

8 Ibid., p.137.

on Religious Instruction in Scotland. But rather than restrict its investigation to the Church of Scotland's facilities, as the Established Church would have liked, the Commission concluded in 1838 that Scotland had sufficient church accommodation if all denominations' facilities were included. This may have been true, but the fact that the government's parliamentary majority depended upon the support of Dissenting MPs should not be overlooked in explaining its refusal to provide the Church of Scotland with financial assistance. Despite the absence of State funding, the Church of Scotland still managed to build 222 churches between 1834-1841, entirely financed from voluntary contributions.[9] Once again, however, Knox's dream would not be fulfilled. The issue of church extension and aggressive territorialism, nevertheless, would not disappear entirely as long as Chalmers remained at the forefront of ecclesiastical life in Scotland. Chalmers later returned to the question of church extension after the Ten Years' Conflict had finally been resolved.

Thomas Chalmers was arguably the single most important clergyman in early nineteenth-century Scotland. Chalmers' reputation was based upon his leadership of the Evangelical wing of the Church of Scotland during the bitter Ten Years' Conflict which culminated in the Disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843 and the creation of the Free Church of Scotland. It was by no means clear immediately after the Disruption that Chalmers' influence would prove so lasting. Chalmers was an unpopular figure within the Established Church, having played such a prominent role in the break up of the Church of Scotland. In addition, with the introduction of a new Poor Law Act in 1845, it seemed that Chalmers had lost the debate over legal poor relief. For over a hundred years, those interested in Chalmers' career were drawn to his son-in-law William Hanna's excellent but hardly impartial *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*. Recently, research by Stewart J. Brown shed new light on the diversity of Chalmers' interests. While not neglecting other aspects of his career, Brown

9 W. Hanna, *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. iv, p.87.

showed that Chalmers' life can only be understood in terms of his desire to establish a Godly Commonwealth - at the heart of which would be the parish system - in the midst of a society which was being transformed by industrialisation and urbanisation. More than anything else, it was Chalmers' views on the parish system which ensured that he would continue to influence Scotland long after his death. Although the Free Church did not adopt the parish unit of administration after the Disruption, it did adopt an aggressive home-mission based upon the territorial plan which proved one of Chalmers' most enduring legacies to the Free Church. It is this legacy which concerns us here. This thesis will concentrate primarily on the Free Church's efforts to implement Chalmers' ideal of territorialism in Scottish cities and the relationship of territorialism to its other areas of home-mission work. By casting an eye regularly at the Church of Scotland's activities, it will also become apparent that the Free Church was not the only denomination which regarded territorialism as a possible solution to the social, economic and religious problems in industrialising Scotland.

The first chapter explores the difficulties faced by the Free Church in the 1840s as it sought to establish a national Church at a time when the country was in the grip of a severe economic depression and when a number of social problems appeared particularly entrenched. It was in this atmosphere that Chalmers began a territorial operation in the West Port in Edinburgh which he hoped would serve as an example for Christian philanthropists who were interested in addressing social problems in an increasingly urbanised and industrialised country.

It was Glasgow more than anywhere else in Scotland which appeared to have suffered most from the social problems attached to industrialisation. In 1851, the Free Church created a separate Glasgow Evangelization Committee and gave it an independent collection in the hope that the territorial plan could be

implemented throughout the city. The second chapter will explore to what extent the Committee and the territorial missions it encouraged succeeded in solving the social and religious problems associated with the industrial capital of Scotland.

While Glasgow received special attention between 1851-1859, other cities and urban areas remained under the supervision of the Home Mission Committee. The difficulties the Free Church faced in these areas are considered in the third chapter. It will be seen that territorialism was as much a response to a city's social and economic problems as to the problems of non-churchgoing or religious indifference. Special attention will be given in this chapter to Aberdeen and Edinburgh. Aberdeen was a Free Church stronghold and remained relatively stable socially and therefore territorialism appeared largely unnecessary. In contrast, the territorial plan proved to be a bulwark of the Free Church's home-mission policy in Edinburgh. As we will see, territorial churches became a feature in the Old Town of Edinburgh in the way which Chalmers had hoped they would when he began the West Port experiment.

Although territorialism achieved some impressive results in those areas where it had been implemented, by the early 1860s it was clear that it had failed to solve the difficulties faced by religious organisations in large urban centres or to address the social problems linked to urbanisation. The revival which began in 1859 raised enormous expectations within the Free Church and other Churches. This revival, the first national revival to take place in the Free Church, differed from previous revivals both in its intensity and its geographical spread. The fourth chapter will look at how the revival affected territorial churches and consider its long-term significance for the territorial movement.

While the revival between 1859-1862 was intense, its long-term effects on religious enthusiasm proved short-lived. This disappointed many ministers, but it did not mean that confidence in what a revival could achieve had disappeared

entirely. As we will see in chapter five, many ministers were convinced that another revival would enable Churches to build upon the work of the previous spiritual awakening and finally allow them to reassert the traditional role of the Christian Church in Scottish society. Most Churches, therefore, welcomed the American evangelists Moody and Sankey to Scotland in 1873. The revival between 1873-1874 proved more intense than its predecessor in the early 1860s and its impact both in the short and long-term proved more substantial. By conducting a campaign which centred on large and generally emotional meetings, Moody and Sankey seemed to indicate that Chalmers' territorial plan was not the only way to evangelise those outwith the Church in Scotland. As we will see, if the Free Church's confidence in territorialism was ever shaken, it was shortly after Moody and Sankey's visit to Scotland.

Moody and Sankey's stay in Scotland coincided with a time when the Free Church's perception of itself was changing dramatically. Since the Disruption, the Free Church had looked upon itself as the true, national Church and it followed that it had a responsibility to place ordinances before the entire population. In 1873, when the Free Church entered into an alliance with the United Presbyterian Church on disestablishment, it seemed that those who regarded the Church as a gathered Church of true believers rather than a national Church had finally gained control of the Free Church. National Churches felt that they had a responsibility to place spiritual instruction before the entire population and to encourage people to attend church. In theory at least, local parish or territorial churches were intended for those who lived within their surrounding area. Gathered Churches, however, did not feel that they had such a nationwide responsibility and at a local level gathered churches attracted Christians to their services from throughout a town, city or district and not just from their local neighbourhood. Chapter six will look at what implications this change had on the way the Free Church conducted its home-

mission campaign. This chapter will also explore the rise of congregational missions, and examine whether or not they were an improvement on territorialism in terms of ingathering. We will also look at territorialism within the Church of Scotland, and see how the aggressive system became a vital aspect of the Establishment's Church defence strategy developed in response to the heightened disestablishment campaign after 1874.

In the 1870s and 1880s, the Free Church was forced to address a number of important issues such as Church union negotiations, theological controversies and a disestablishment campaign. Chapter seven will look at whether or not these issues affected the desire for home-mission work within the Free Church. By also looking at the rise of State intervention in economic and social matters and the development of labour politics we will see how they often challenged the Churches' position in society.

In the early 1890s, Robert Howie, minister of St. Mary's Free church in Glasgow, emerged as the kind of vocal leader of the home-mission movement which the Free Church had not seen since Chalmers. Howie firmly believed that the Free Church had neglected mission work and church extension since the mid-1870s. As a result he felt they had undermined the good work achieved by the Free Church before the mid-1870s and that this had led to a breakdown in church provision in the largest urban centres. Chapter eight will examine the profound influence which Howie exerted upon the Free Church and also the church-extension campaigns which the Free Church launched in many cities in the 1890s. This chapter will also look at the findings and recommendations of the Special Commission on Home Mission Work which had been appointed to investigate all aspects of the Free Church's evangelistic campaign at a time when the Church stood on the brink of union with the United Presbyterian Church and a new century.

While a number of aspects of nineteenth-century Scottish ecclesiastical

history have received considerable attention, the subject of home-mission work has remained largely under-researched. This is perhaps surprising given that interest in levels of churchgoing and the extent of religious influences during the nineteenth century have preoccupied religious historians in Scotland in recent years. All Protestant Churches participated in mission work at some time and it gave them an opportunity to work amongst the kind of people who were most likely to be adversely affected by industrialisation and urbanisation. Therefore, their involvement in such work should not be overlooked. Similarly, the Free Church, despite the momentous role it played in Scotland during the nineteenth century, has not yet received the attention it deserves.

Thomas Chalmers' St. John's and West Port experiments have been looked at in some depth, most notably in Stewart J. Brown's *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth* (Oxford,1982) and in his article 'The Disruption and Urban Poverty: Thomas Chalmers and the West Port Operation in Edinburgh, 1844-47', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xxi (1978). Brown has also provided the only real overall view of home-mission work in his short but valuable 'Thomas Chalmers and the Communal Ideal', in T.C. Smout (ed.) *Victorian Values* (Oxford,1992). Donald Withrington has researched churchgoing in the nineteenth century in 'The 1851 Census of Religious Worship and Education with a Note on Church Accommodation in nineteenth century Scotland', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xviii (1977). Also worth reading is Withrington's 'Non-Churchgoing, c.1750-c.1850: A Preliminary Study', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xvii (1972).

This thesis has benefited from the growing body of literature concerning religion in nineteenth-century Scotland. C.G. Brown's *The Social History of Religion In Scotland since 1730* (London,1987) remains a valuable book and has recently been revised and updated in *Religion and Social Class in Scotland since 1707* (Edinburgh,1997). Similarly, S. Mechie's *The Church and Scottish Social*

Development 1780-1870 (London,1960) looks at how Presbyterian Churches were able to influence social life in Scotland during the nineteenth century. Neither of these works, however, looks in detail at the Churches' home-mission work at this time of rapid industrialisation and urbanisation. More general accounts of nineteenth-century Scottish religious life can be found in A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch's *The Scottish Church 1688-1843: The Age of the Moderates* (Edinburgh,1973), *The Church in Victorian Scotland 1843-1874* (Edinburgh,1975), and *The Church in Late Victorian Scotland 1874-1900* (Edinburgh,1978). The Free Church, however, is not treated very favourably in these works. J.H.S. Burleigh's now dated *A Church History of Scotland* (London,1960) still has some value for the general reader. More general accounts of Scottish social, political and economic developments after 1707 can be found in William Ferguson's *Scotland, 1689 to the Present* (Edinburgh,1990), R.H. Campbell, *Scotland since 1707: the Rise of an Industrial Society* (Oxford,1965), and I.G.C. Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland 1832-1924* (Edinburgh,1986). T.C. Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (London,1986) is also a valuable read.

Much of what is available about the Free Church has concentrated on the Church's origins in 1843 and the secessions of 1893 and 1900 which contributed to so much political manoeuvring between the Church's different factions. While these issues of ecclesiastical politics are of great importance, it must be remembered that a Church is essentially a spiritual organisation which operates for the welfare of its adherents and for the conversion of the irreligious. Good general accounts of the Free Church will be found in N.L. Walker, *Chapters from the History of the Free Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh,1895), T. Smith, *Memoirs of James Begg* (2 vols.,Edinburgh,1888), and P.C. Simpson, *The Life of Principal Rainy* (2 vols.,Edinburgh,1909). The last two provide valuable insights into the internal tensions and divisions which were such an important feature of the Free Church during its fifty-seven year existence. J. Macleod's Ph.D. thesis

'Origins of the Free Presbyterian Church in Scotland', University of Edinburgh (1995) looks at the difficulties the Free Church experienced in reconciling the different views of its ministers and members in the Highlands with those of their counterparts in the Lowlands. Likewise, A.A. Maclaren's seminal *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen* (London,1974) explored how social structures in Aberdeen influenced the Disruption and the social composition of the Free Church in that city. Of course, it is important to understand the issues which led to the Disruption. G.D. Henderson's *Heritage-A Study of the Disruption* (Edinburgh,1943), and R. Buchanan's *The Ten Years Conflict* (2 vols.,Edinburgh,1849) provide detailed accounts of the acrimonious split. S.J. Brown and M. Fry (eds.), *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption* (Edinburgh,1993) provides a modern perspective on this dramatic event and looks at its wide-ranging significance. Particularly valuable in this volume is S.J. Brown's 'The Ten Years Conflict and the Disruption of 1843', which details the often complicated issues involved in an understandable and readable essay.

It is perhaps not surprising that the turbulence which characterised Scottish society in the first half of the nineteenth century should lead to the break up of the country's Established Church. The tensions which had emerged within the Church of Scotland and brought the Free Church into existence were in many ways a result of the enormous changes which had taken place in Scotland's religious, social, political and economic environment since the late eighteenth century. Therefore, before looking at the development of the Free Church of Scotland, it is important to consider what kind of country Scotland was in the first half of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER ONE

BRAVE NEW WORLD, 1843-1851

i. Introduction

In the first half of the nineteenth century urbanisation and industrialisation continued apace in Scotland. These forces transformed the country from one where living and working in a rural environment was an almost universal experience, to a situation in which an increasing number moved to towns and cities to live and find employment in industry. This migration, whether temporary or permanent, ensured that each city could call upon a large and flexible labour pool to adapt to the changing needs of the Scottish economy.[1] Scotland's economic growth had been steady since it gained access to English world markets in 1707, and Scotland was well placed to exploit the needs of industry in the nineteenth century. This growth provided Scottish businessmen with sufficient investment capital to diversify and exploit the abundant mineral resources which nature had bestowed on the country.

As the Scottish economy became increasingly specialised in the nineteenth century, each city became identified with particular industries, products and services. Glasgow developed from an economy based on the tobacco trade in the eighteenth century, to a textile-dominated economy in the first half of the nineteenth century, before moving into heavy industry in the second half of the century. Consequently, Glasgow became the city of the skilled workers, whose superior wages allowed them to maintain a cultural identity which emphasised respectability through the values of independence, temperance and thrift.[2]

If Glasgow was the city of the skilled worker then Edinburgh, with its

[1] See R.H. Campbell, *Scotland Since 1707: the Rise of an Industrial Society* (Oxford,1965); S. and O. Checkland, *Industry and Ethos: Scotland 1832-1914* (Edinburgh,1984); W.H. Marwick, *Economic Developments in Victorian Scotland* (London,1936).

[2] See R.A. Cage (ed.), *The Working Class in Glasgow 1750-1914* (London,1987); A. Gibb, *Glasgow: The Making of the City* (London,1983).

University, administrative responsibilities, legal courts and banking, was the city of the professional middle class. Edinburgh's administrative needs also encouraged a thriving printing and publishing trade. In addition, smaller but developing industries, such as brewing and the rubber industry, provided additional employment opportunities for the capital's working class.

As with Glasgow, Dundee's economy in the first half of the nineteenth century was dominated by textiles and the independent handloom weaver, although the power loom increasingly displaced the handloom weaver. Dundee also diversified into the production of jute following the timely discovery in 1832 that jute, if properly treated, contained sufficient flexibility to enable it to be threaded through a machine.

Of the four cities, Aberdeen remained the most homogeneous owing to its less industrialised economy. The collapse of the city's textile industry in the 1840s forced Aberdeen to develop many of its other industries such as shipbuilding, fishing and shipping, all of which benefited from improvements made to the city's harbour in 1780 and between 1810 and 1832.[3]

Although it is possible to interpret the Scottish economy as a largely uninterrupted success in the early nineteenth century, the social consequences which emerged from industrialisation and urbanisation brought untold misery and hardship to large sections of the urban population. Industrial growth occurred within local government structures which were poorly equipped to cope.[4] The Burgh Reform Act of 1833 enabled rate payers to elect local governments, but a time-honoured hostility to taxation and the prevailing ethos of *laissez-faire* ensured that there were few serious attempts to tackle urban social problems. In defence of the Scottish governing classes it is possible to argue that urban life was by no means the majority experience. In 1841, only a third of the population lived in settlements of over 5,000 people. Less excusable was the

3 A.A. Maclaren, *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen* (London,1974), pp.1-22.

4 T.C. Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (London,1987).

continued assertion of the rights and duties of the individual. Self-help was an admirable philosophy for those in a position to help themselves, but was at odds with an economic system where individuals counted for less and less, dominated as they were by forces outwith their control.[5] Many of these problems were borne out by the *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* in 1842. The Report revealed the difficulties cities experienced in responding to social problems when compared to less densely populated areas.[6]

The Disruption of the Church of Scotland was the culmination of the battle for the soul of the Established Church during the first half of the nineteenth century, as two contending groups, Evangelicals and Moderates, fought out a series of bitter disputes.[7] The Moderates were the party of the ecclesiastical and political establishment whose rational, but often uninspiring patterns of belief made them largely willing to accept the status quo. Evangelicals, on the other hand, were less willing to compromise with the prevailing moral standards, while their orthodox Calvinism led to a strong conviction in their own personal salvation which was only equalled by their enthusiasm to take the Gospel to those outwith the Church's ordinances. As has been shown, the early nineteenth century was a period of enormous socioeconomic change which in turn created new problems for the Church of Scotland, most notably the breakdown in the operation of an effective parish ministry. From 1810, the Evangelicals had attempted to lead the Church in adapting to the urban-industrial environment by strengthening the role of the parish ministry and putting an end to pluralities, the practice by which many urban parish ministers also held university chairs. Evangelicals also sought to reassert the Church's

5 W. Ferguson, *Scotland: 1689 to the Present*, 5th edn. (Edinburgh,1990), p.301.

6 See M.W. Flinn, (ed.), *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* (Edinburgh,1965).

7 R. Buchanan, *The Ten Years' Conflict* (2 vols.,London,1849); J. Bryce, *Ten Years of the Church of Scotland* (2 vols.,Edinburgh,1850); S.J. Brown, 'The Ten Years' Conflict and the Disruption of 1843', in S.J. Brown and M. Fry (eds.), *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption* (Edinburgh,1993), pp.1-27.

control over existing areas of authority such as poor relief, education and communal discipline.[8]

The tensions between the Moderates and Evangelicals finally came to a head during the Ten Years' Conflict. Initially, this dispute had been over the question of patronage. The Evangelicals had attempted to restore the historic right of parishioners to veto a patron's nominee as minister, by passing the Veto Act at the General Assembly in 1834. Although the Act appeared to operate satisfactorily in practice, the democratic spirit which it unleashed in ecclesiastical matters meant it was opposed by many Moderates, patrons and ultimately the civil courts. When the Veto Act was declared illegal by the Court of Session in 1838, a decision upheld by the House of Lords in the following year, the patronage controversy developed into a wider and more explosive conflict over the Church's spiritual independence. The refusal of the civil courts to recognise the Evangelical idea of spiritual independence, led to the Disruption of the Established Church on 18 May 1843 - a dramatic conclusion to the impasse which had arisen between the two radically opposed groupings in Church and State.

Although those who constituted the new Free Church of Scotland left the Church of Scotland voluntarily, they were at pains to stress that they were not Voluntaries, believing in the separation of Church and State. Instead, they retained a belief in an Established Church. It therefore followed that the Free Church had a duty to place Christian instruction and ordinances within the reach of the entire population. To achieve this, the Free Church embarked upon an ambitious programme of duplicating the Church of Scotland's ecclesiastical resources. This led in many areas to unnecessary overlapping, but the speed with which the Free Church set about creating a nationwide Church was quite remarkable. So too were the sums of money raised during the 'Hungry Forties' as Free Church members, especially the commercial middle class, gave generously to enable the building of churches, schools, divinity colleges, manses and

[8] S.J. Brown, 'The Ten Years' Conflict and the Disruption of 1843', p.5.

anything else that would allow it to fulfil the belief in itself as the true Established Church.[9]

ii. The 1840s, Troubled Times

Throughout the nineteenth century concern over intemperance had been growing because all the evidence pointed towards a wider availability, and a subsequently greater level, of alcohol consumption. In 1822, the duty on spirits was lowered from 7s to 2s10d a gallon, leading to a recorded increase in consumption from two million gallons in 1820 to six million in 1830. Although this large increase in recorded alcohol consumption resulted in part from the decline of smuggling and illicit stills and therefore of unrecorded consumption, the increase shocked public opinion at the time.[10] Six million gallons seemed to be an inordinately large consumption for such a small population.

In the rural society excessive drinking had generally been associated with market time and hiring fairs. However, in towns, not only was there a wider availability of alcohol, but the greater purchasing power of the working classes increased their ability to buy drink. Whereas the middle classes were happy to imbibe within their own homes, the tendency of the urban poor towards open-air drinking outraged refined sensibilities. Because drunkenness was so closely associated with the working class, it was not long before alcohol began to receive most of the blame for working-class social problems. The low cost and easy availability of alcohol licences ensured that there was some 17,000 general and whisky licences in Scotland in 1830, most of them for establishments that operated within working-class communities.[11]

9 T. Brown, *Annals of the Disruption* (Edinburgh,1893); N.L. Walker, *Chapters from the History of the Free Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh,1895).

10 S. Mechie, *The Church and Scottish Social Development 1780-1870* (London,1960), p.83. See E. King, *Scotland Sober and Free: The Temperance Movement 1829-1979* (Glasgow,1979).

11 S. Mechie, *The Church and Scottish Social Development 1780-1870*, p.83. L.J. Saunders, *Scottish Democracy 1815-1840* (Edinburgh,1950), p.232. See also D.C. Paton, 'Drink and the Temperance Movement in Nineteenth-century Scotland', Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh (1977); D.C. Paton, 'Temperance and the Churches in Scotland 1829-1927', *Scottish Records Association Conference Report*, 7 (March,1987), pp.22-29.

The reaction to Scotland's increasing intemperance had its roots in North America where a temperance movement had emerged in the 1820s. It was brought to Scotland by John Dunlop, a Greenock lawyer and elder in the Church of Scotland, who was so outraged by Scottish drunkenness, particularly when compared to France, that he believed the only solution lay in the hands of the individual by adopting the total abstinence principle. Through his influence, and that of his colleague, the Evangelical Glasgow publisher William Collins, the first temperance societies were formed in 1829 at Greenock and Maryhill. In November of that year a regional dimension was added to the movement when the Glasgow and West of Scotland Temperance Society was established. Before long the movement had spread out of its west of Scotland heartland and so Scotland could boast 100 temperance societies with 15,000 members by 1830.[12] Dunlop favoured total abstinence, but the early temperance societies advocated only abstinence from strong wines and spirits. Total abstinence can be dated to 1836 and traced to Preston and the work of Joseph Livesey. It was not until the late 1830s, as concern over intemperance grew, that the movement in Scotland turned in Dunlop's direction leading to the formation of a Total Abstinence Society in 1838.

It was not surprising that the individualistic Evangelicals would have welcomed the temperance movement which sought individual improvement albeit through a group activity. By embracing temperance, the Evangelicals expressed their commitment both to elevating the individual, and their larger desire to reform society. The Disruption provided a major boost for the temperance cause, as the Evangelicals of the Free Church were able to supply the movement with its first official backing from a Presbyterian Church. The prevalence of drunkenness in the 1840s accentuated the view that society was on the brink of a precipice, which was a widely shared belief within the Free Church.

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12 S. Mechie, *The Church and Scottish Social Development 1780-1870*, p.90. P.T. Winskill, *The Temperance Movement and Its Workers* (-,1891), p.59.

The opinion that drunkenness was the cause rather than the consequence of poverty, disease and poor housing was so commonplace in the 1840s, that the physician William P. Alison wrote:

> When I say that I consider the amount of poverty and consequent suffering as the main cause of the great mortality in Edinburgh and Glasgow, I am aware that many will accuse me of overlooking what they regard as the most powerful of all causes of distress among the lower people, the use of intoxicating liquors.[13]

After the Disruption the Free Church required identifiable features of its own to distinguish it from the Church of Scotland, and temperance soon became one of the great Free Church causes. In 1846, the General Assembly decided to set aside a Sunday for its ministers to preach to their congregations on the evils of drink.[14] In the following year a Conference was held by those ministers and elders who were temperance enthusiasts. They decided to ask the General Assembly to form a Committee on the subject. By granting this request the Free Church became the first Presbyterian Church to show a serious commitment to the temperance movement. In 1849, the Free Church began its own temperance society with thirty-three ministers as members.

According to many people within the Free Church, it was alcohol, more than anything else, which prevented people attending church.[15] This argument was given credence by the physician George Bell as he traversed the wynds of Edinburgh. "A few missionaries are at work, but can they hopefully contend with an epidemic of spirit-dealers?"[16] In advocating greater control of the drink trade, Bell recognised that, "Almost all the whisky-shops are in the localities where the poor reside. They create drunkards as banks create bankrupts."[17]

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13 W.P. Alison, *Observations on the Management of the Poor in Scotland, and its Effects on the Health of the Great Towns* (Edinburgh,1840), p.9 of Preface.

14 T. Brown, *Annals of the Disruption*, pp.718-719.

15 There was a great deal of controversy within the Free Church over temperance between 1846-1859. Many members who were involved in the drink trade were worried that the movement may affect their livelihood. See C.G. Brown, 'Religion and the Development of an Urban Society: Glasgow 1780-1914', Ph.D. thesis, University of Glasgow, (1982), vol. ii, pp.144-155.

16 G. Bell, *Day and Night in the Wynds of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh,1973), p.25.

17 Ibid.

W.P. Alison may have felt excessive drinking was merely the result of poverty, but the prevailing view within the Free Church was that drink as the origin of crime, disease and poverty, was draining not only Scotland's national vitality but also the purses of taxpayers. James Begg, Free Church minister at the Newington church in Edinburgh, subscribed to this view when analysing the growing cost of the poor relief in 1849. "A leading cause of the present rapid increase of pauperism is undoubtedly *the prevalence of whisky shops and drunkenness.*" In words reminiscent of Dunlop's shame when he had compared the Scottish situation to that of France, James Begg wrote that "Drunkenness is pre-eminently the curse of Scotland - the amazement of all foreigners - the manifest parent of many of our social evils." Having visited America, where drunkenness was at least not so much a public event, Begg was embarrassed when comparing the situation to the scenes of nightly revelry on almost every street corner any day of the week in Scotland. "One blushes for his country in returning from America, - temptation and drunkenness at every door."[18]

The fact that drunkenness seemed to be a particularly Scottish problem was the main reason why intemperance was given a greater sense of urgency in the 1840s, particularly within the Free Church. All the evidence rightly pointed to drink being a major cause of non-churchgoing, but what did that say about the Presbyterian tradition in Scotland, that its situation could be so unfavourably compared with Catholic France? The Free Church as the most committed defender of Scotland's Presbyterian tradition felt duty-bound to fight back. In 1849, the Free Church General Assembly agreed to petition the House of Commons, explaining the extent of drunkenness in Scotland and urging the adoption of any measure which would reduce its prevalence.[19] Such petitioning ultimately led to the Forbes Mackenzie Act in 1853 which closed all public houses between the hours of 11p.m. and 8 a.m. and outlawed the sale of alcohol on

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[18] J. Begg, *Pauperism and the Poor Laws* (Edinburgh,1849), pp.17-18.

[19] *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1849) p.276.

Sundays with the exception of hotels. This Act, however, did not so much reflect the Churches' concern over drunkenness, but rather their desire to prevent drinking on Sundays. Excessive drinking on the Lord's Day was fast becoming one of the most outwardly visible challenges to Presbyterianism in Scotland.

In fact, the rigid observance of the sabbath had long been in decline. Urbanisation not only provided alternative attractions on a Sunday to local church attendance, but also made it more difficult to enforce kirk-session discipline against transgressors. A reaction to this trend led to the creation of a Scottish Society for the Due Observance of the Lord's Day in 1839 at Edinburgh. This backlash against the apparent laxity of sabbath observance was largely due to the resurgent Evangelicals, who were destined to make the nineteenth century the great age of Scottish sabbatarianism. Before 1843, the Evangelicals had long looked for a stricter sabbath observance, and so were quick to lead the Free Church to the forefront of the campaign to enforce the fourth commandment.

The Free Church had come into existence just as the country was about to take up the question of running trains on Sundays. Not surprisingly the Free Church objected to the practice, and in 1847, under pressure from the Free Church and many English shareholders, the Directors of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Company resolved to stop running trains on Sundays. However, it was apparent that not every Company was willing to bow to such pressure as three railway lines had been created in 1847, all of which ran passenger lines on Sundays.[20] Nevertheless, when the Scottish Central was opened in 1848, it passed a resolution declaring that there would be no Sunday traffic on its lines.[21] Although it seemed that the Churches had gained some notable victories, by the 1860s it became clear that trains were once again running on Sundays where previously the practice had stopped.[22] A similar effort was

20 Ibid., (1847) p.49.

21 Ibid., (1848) p.256.

22 C.J.A. Robertson, 'Early Scottish Railways and the Observance of the Sabbath', *Scottish Historical Review*, lvii (1978), pp.143-168.

made by the Free Church in 1848 against the Post Office's proposals to begin a Sunday letter delivery service, which ended in victory for the sabbatarians.[23]

In response to continual sabbath violations, however, the General Assembly in 1844 enjoined all ministers to spend a Sunday sermon preaching to their congregation, presumably to the converted, on their duty to maintain the sabbath.[24] Such was the pressing nature of the problem that before long most synods had their own Committee on the subject to monitor the state of affairs, and to remind congregations of their duty in such matters. However, in 1846, of the three reasons given for non-churchgoing by the Committee on the State of Religion, sabbath profanation, and intemperance were emphatically condemned, but the third, long working hours, was merely suggested as a reason which the Committee was at pains to stress it had no opinion on.[25] The Church apparently saw it as within their purview to tell the working class how to live their lives, but not to criticise the middle class on how they should organise their workplace. No doubt the Church believed that such matters were to be decided by the market in a way which, curiously, they did not extend to the sale of alcohol.

Another development in Scotland in the 1840s was the emergence of a large Irish-born, predominantly Catholic population, which came to Scotland following the Irish potato famine in 1845 and 1846. In 1800, the Catholic population of Scotland had formed a small, native, mainly rural population numbering 30,000 and concentrated largely in the north-east, the western seaboard and the Isles.[26] As long as their numbers remained small, and so could not challenge the Protestant hegemony, they were tolerated, if not exactly liked.

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23 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1846) p.256.

24 *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1845) p.18.

25 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1846) pp.78-80.

26 J.F. McCaffrey, 'Roman Catholics in Scotland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xxi (1983), p.275. See also P.F. Anson, *The Catholic Church in Modern Scotland* (London,1937); J.E. Handley, *The Irish in Modern Scotland* (Cork,1947); D. McRoberts, *Modern Scottish Catholicism 1878-1978* (Glasgow,1879); W. Sloan, 'Religious affiliation and the immigrant experience: Catholic Irish and Protestant Highlanders in Glasgow 1830-1850', in T.M. Devine (ed.), *Irish Immigrants and Scottish Society* (Edinburgh,1990).

Concern about their presence only began when the Irish arrived in large numbers during the 1840s, increasing the Catholic population to 150,000 by 1850.

Although they provided an indispensable, mobile, low-wage workforce during a period of rapid industrial expansion, the depressed state in which the Irish arrived meant that they tended to settle in areas which already had their fair share of social problems. In coming from a rural society where money had little real meaning, their arrival in the Scottish economy also tended to depress real wages.[27] This meant that they were disliked by the native, Protestant working class as much for their economic consequences as for their religion. This was perhaps not surprising. After all, Ireland's pre-famine population of eight million dwarfed Scotland's 2.8 million which created a genuine fear that if immigration did not relent then there was every danger of a flooded labour market leading to a low-wage economy.

In order to oppose Catholic emancipation (which was none the less granted by Parliament in 1829), and thereafter to oppose further legal concessions, a number of organisations were established. The British Society for Promoting the Religious Principles of the Reformation was created in 1827, and the Protestant Association was formed in 1835. Both of these organisations were based in London, but they also had branches in Scotland. The first distinctly Scottish organisation to be formed was the Scottish Reformation Society in 1850, which was a response to the alarm generated by the increasing prominence of Catholics in Scotland during the 1840s.[28] Protestant zealots tended to overlook that the Catholic Church in Scotland was even less prepared to cater for the large number of its people descending upon urban Scotland in the 1840s, than the Scottish Presbyterian Churches were to look after native Protestants moving in the same direction.

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27 T. Gallagher, 'A Tale of Two Cities: Communal Strife in Glasgow and Liverpool before 1914', pp.106-129, in R. Swift and S. Gilley (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City* (London,1985), p.110.

28 I.A. Muirhead, 'Catholic Emancipation in Scotland: The Debate and Aftermath', *Innes Review*, xxiv (1973), pp.103-120; I. A. Muirhead, 'Catholic Emancipation: Scottish Reactions in 1829', *Innes Review*, xxiv (1973), pp.26-42.

In their position as the self-appointed guardians of the Presbyterian heritage, the Free Church was in no mood to compromise with what it saw as the Catholic menace. In 1845, the Free Church General Assembly agreed to petition Parliament against the endowment of the Catholic training seminary at Maynooth in Ireland, and also decided to form its own Committee on Popery to monitor what it saw as Roman Catholicism's campaign for global conquest.[29] The pastoral address in 1846 summed up the hysterical attitude of many Free Church ministers.

> Popery is advancing with stealthy but steady footsteps; it is multiplying its chapels, its priests, its nunneries, its cathedrals; it is largely supplied with funds by the zeal of its Continental votaries, and seems bent on the re-conquest of Britain, the bulwark of Protestantism, as its crowning triumph or rather as a prelude to universal dominion.[30]

To the Free Church, the benefits of Reformed Protestant Scotland were obvious, and so any attempt to drag the country back to the 'bad' old days of pre-Reformation Catholicism had to be resisted. The Free Church regarded Catholicism as superstitious, its adherents ill-educated, and its Church government anything but democratic. To ensure this was at least understood by its own members, the Assembly in 1847 enjoined all ministers to preach on the dangers of Popery to their congregations.[31] It would be wrong to suggest that the Free Church's hostility to Catholicism was exclusively based on religious grounds however. Of equal importance in their distrust of Catholicism was the belief that its adherents were inseparably connected to crime, poverty and disease. As William Tweedie, the minister at the Free Tolbooth church in Edinburgh, told the Assembly in 1850:

> Since poverty and disease combined to drive so many from Ireland, the tide of immigration has been so great, that in some towns on the west coast of Scotland it is supposed that almost one half the population

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29 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1845) pp.85-96.

30 *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1846) p.92.

31 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1847) p.309.

> are Irish, the great majority of whom are Romanists, while in all our large towns the numbers are so great as materially to affect both the morals and the social condition of the lower classes. In some portions of our cities, sufficiently sunk before, this immigration has occasioned a yet farther descent in the moral scale, and the records of our city police, as well as the lists of our city's poor's-houses, bear abundant evidence of the injurious effects which have thus been produced. Pauperism and crime have gone hand in hand, and the result now is a state of festering corruption, which cannot be contemplated without pain and alarm by every friend of truth or of the soul of man.[32]

As we have seen, the Free Church of Scotland began its life at an uncertain time in Scotland's history. The 1840s was a period of severe economic depression in Britain, which cast serious doubt over whether it was possible to enjoy continual industrial progress. It was also a time of mass political agitation in the form of Chartism as the working class and those sections of the middle classes who were excluded from the Parliamentary Reform Act in 1832 demanded their own representation at Westminster. For the Churches it was no less of a testing period, especially in the ever rapidly expanding towns. For most Free Church ministers there was a stark difference between the relatively stable rural areas, and the social decay of the cities where the concentration of mass intemperance and the declining importance of sabbath observance seemed to fly in the face of Presbyterianism's historical authority. Meanwhile, the increasing presence of Catholics in mainland Scotland was seen as a significant challenge to the Presbyterian dominance which had been largely unthreatened for almost three hundred years. As the most committed defender of that tradition, the Free Church was anxious to find something which would allow organised Presbyterian religion to maintain a relevance in what appeared to be a hostile new social environment.

iii. The Return to the Civil Courts

The Church of Scotland's church-extension campaign in the 1830s was a response

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32 Ibid., (1850) p.294.

to the enormous population growth Scotland experienced in the early nineteenth century. In 1800, Scotland's population was 1,608,000, but it had risen to 2,888,472 by 1851. As much of this growth occurred in the cities it rendered the existing church accommodation inadequate to place ordinances within the reach of everyone. Before 1834, the Church had attempted to keep pace with the rise in population by building chapels-of-ease. These congregations were unlike existing churches in that they had neither office-bearers, kirk-sessions or representation in the Church courts, until the General Assembly in 1834 passed the Chapels Act which finally gave these congregations those rights. The Assembly in 1834 also saw the beginning of Thomas Chalmers' convenership of the Church Accommodation Committee which added new vigour to the church-extension campaign. Despite the Melbourne government's refusal to provide State funding, the Committee managed to build 222 new churches between 1834 and 1841, entirely financed from voluntary funds.[33]

Whereas existing congregations had responsibility for ecclesiastical matters such as kirk-session discipline, as well as civil responsibility in areas such as poor relief and education, the churches built after 1834 were *quoad sacra* parishes which only had ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The function of such a parish was to sub-divide an existing *quoad omnia* parish which had either too large a population, or where the parish church was placed some distance from many of the parishioners. Although the new churches appeared to operate effectively, the legality of the Chapels Act was challenged during the Ten Years' Conflict, and declared illegal by the Court of Session when it adjudicated on the Stewarton case in 1843. This ruling not only reduced the standing of *quoad sacra* churches to that of chapels-of-ease, but by withdrawing their right to representation in the Church courts it brought an end to the Evangelical majority in the General Assembly.

When the Disruption finally took place it left the *quoad sacra* churches in

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31 For a fuller discussion of the Church of Scotland's Church Extension movement in the 1830s see S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, pp.211-281.

a difficult position. Whereas most outgoing ministers and congregations of parish churches were content to relinquish their parish church, few outgoing *quoad sacra* congregations were willing to give up a building which they had largely financed themselves. In presenting the Free Church Law Committee report in 1843 Alexander Dunlop maintained that, with regard to the *quoad sacra* churches, "In point of equity and justice, I suppose there are not two men in the kingdom who will entertain a different opinion as to the party to whom it belongs."[34]

Perhaps recognising the law would not be in its favour, the Law Committee suggested that the only 'fair' solution would be for the churches to be sold and the money thereafter returned to the original subscribers.[35] There was every possibility that much of the returned money would be given to the Free Church. In one case in Dundee, for example, £1,000 had been raised for a church which was never built because of the Disruption. The money was subsequently returned to the original subscribers, and £900 of this money was then given to the Free Church.[36] The Established Church, however, refused any Free Church proposal to settle the issue by arbitration, preferring instead the likelihood of a favourable judgement from the civil courts. In order to avoid this, many within the Free Church began looking to Parliament to intervene with an equitable compromise, which was possibly naive given the lack of support the Evangelicals had received from that quarter during the Ten Years' Conflict. The best hope for the Free Church seemed to lie in their insistence that the money had been intended for erecting parish churches rather than chapels-of-ease. This point had been one of the Glasgow Church Building Society's founding articles.

In 1847, James Begg, convener of the Committee on *Quoad Sacra* churches, was in a position to tell the Assembly that there was some £400,000 worth of property in the chapels-of-ease and *quoad sacra* churches, which he

34 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1843) p.141.
35 Ibid.
36 T. Brown, *Annals of the Disruption*, p.487.

claimed had largely been given by those with Free Church sympathies.[37] Although Begg acknowledged that some Free Church ministers had expressed a preference to see the issue resolved in the Scottish courts, he personally favoured an approach to Parliament before the courts could deliver their final verdict.[38] Begg's biographer later described this action as "injudicious", but in view of the recent legal decisions in Scotland it was difficult for the Free Church to know where to turn next.[39] It was also important the Free Church acted quickly. While most Free Church supporters were in no doubt that the churches built after 1834 had been intended as parish churches, many judges were declaring that those churches had been intended only as chapels-of-ease.[40]

The General Assembly decided to accept Begg's recommendation which was expressed in a motion put forward by Robert Candlish, who explained that the favoured Free Church plan was to sell the churches and then return the money to the original subscribers, but such a plan would probably require an Act of law and so the Free Church would have to petition Parliament first.[41] The petition itself was drawn up by a Committee of which Begg was convener, and the Committee did its best to present what they saw as the Free Church's moderate aims. It reiterated the argument that the money had been largely given by Free Church sympathisers who expected it to be spent erecting parish churches, and not chapels-of-ease as the Court of Session had later declared. To emphasise its moderation the petition explained that the Free Church was only resorting to Parliament after the Church of Scotland had rejected all its attempts to settle the issue by amicable arbitration. Only Parliament, the petition stressed, could now solve the problem by the favoured Free Church principle of equity.[42]

In 1848, the Free Church gathered further information which it hoped

37 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1847) p.271.
38 Ibid., p.28.
39 T. Smith, *Memoirs of James Begg* (2 vols.,Edinburgh,1888), vol. ii, p.104.
40 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1847) p.291.
41 Ibid., pp.29-30.
42 Ibid., pp.303-304.

would show that the Church of Scotland's possession of *quoad sacra* churches was often detrimental to the health of the churches concerned. Twenty-five of the Church of Scotland's 146 *quoad sacra* churches were closed, and whereas only seventeen had been preaching stations before the Disruption, the figure had subsequently risen to thirty-three.[43] In an appeal to law, however, the question of who was best qualified to fill the churches mattered little against who had the strongest claim to their ownership. Indeed, such statistics made no impression on the House of Lords when in February 1849, it decided in favour of the Church of Scotland in the case of the Glasgow Church Building Society's churches. The Lords declared that these churches had only ever been intended as chapels-of-ease. Predictably, the decision astounded most Free Church sympathisers.

The final decision was given in the case of Glasgow *quoad sacra* churches, but the verdict had ramifications throughout the country. Thus, even after the Church of Scotland had split, the two parties continued to fight in the legal courts with a bitterness which matched anything seen during the Ten Years' Conflict. At a time when the vision of 1843 was in danger of becoming increasingly blurred, the conflict over the *quoad sacra* churches was a reminder to many in the Free Church of why they had left the Established Church. The impact of the decision was felt most severely in the cities. Without church buildings there was a possibility that the congregations which had been developed would fall away from the Free Church or join other denominations.

iv. The West Port Experiment

When the Church of Scotland split in 1843 and the State moved increasingly towards a system of statutory poor relief, it appeared as if everything Thomas Chalmers had worked for in his life was being renounced. In March 1843, Chalmers travelled to London to give evidence before the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Scottish Poor Relief, where he reasserted his belief in the parish

43 Ibid., (1848) p.282.

ideal of poor relief as he had demonstrated at St. John's in Glasgow between 1819-1823.[44] After the Disruption, however, Chalmers' opposition to any form of State-run poor relief seemed nothing short of utopian. More realistic was the argument of W.P. Alison, Chalmers' rival on the subject, who wanted to see the basic elements of the English Poor Law extended to Scotland.[45] Chastened by what he must have seen as a rejection of his life's work, Chalmers decided to demonstrate once again how suitable his communal ideal was to the needs of a modern society.

In an effort to generate public interest for this, Chalmers delivered four public lectures in Edinburgh during June and July 1844, at which he declared his intention of a fresh church-extension campaign that aimed to build sixty new working-class congregations in the capital.[46] To achieve this Chalmers appealed to Edinburgh's philanthropists to come together and form societies of twenty members. They were to sub-divide the city into districts, with each district divided into twenty proportions. A visitor would be assigned to each proportion, with the task of going among the working-class inhabitants and encouraging their attendance at church and school. It would also be each Society's duty to employ a missionary who would undertake the systematic oversight of the mission district as well as conducting Sunday services, weekly prayer meetings and other agencies that were vital to the existence of a vibrant, living congregation.

Chalmers calculated that the financial cost of such a scheme would be £100

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44 Parliamentary Papers, Poor Law Inquiry (Scotland) Sess. 1844, Appendix, Part 1 pp.276-271, S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, p.350. See also S.J. Brown, 'The Disruption and Urban Poverty: Thomas Chalmers and the West Port Operation in Edinburgh, 1844-47', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xx (1978), pp.65-89.

45 See W.P. Alison, *Reply to Dr Chalmers' Objections to an Improvement of the Legal Provision for the Poor in Scotland* (Edinburgh,1841); T. Chalmers, *On the Sufficiency of the Parochial System Without a Poor Rate* (Glasgow,1841); O. Checkland, 'Chalmers and William Pultney Alison: A Conflict of Views on Social Policy', in A.C. Cheyne (ed.),*The Practical and the Pious (Essays on Thomas Chalmers 1780-1847)* (Edinburgh,1985), pp.130-140. E.O.A. Checkland, 'The Church and Urban Poverty: The St John's Parish Experiment in Glasgow 1819-1823', *Philosophical Journal*, (Glasgow) xiii (Spring,1976), pp.37-56.

46 For full speeches see *The Witness*, (19 and 26 June,13 and 27 July,1844).

annually for the first three years which would have to be paid for by members of the society. Once a congregation was formed Chalmers expected the working-class members to take over the administration of the operation, and to meet the expense of building a permanent church and school themselves. At this point Chalmers' aim of a self-supporting working-class congregation with its own minister would be achieved. In order to attract the support of wealthy individuals who were by no means exclusively Free Church supporters, Chalmers repeatedly stressed that the territorial scheme was not intended for the greater good of the Free Church.[47]

Although Chalmers doubted his ability to create a territorial establishment within the Free Church, he was nevertheless partly motivated by a desire to check the Free Church's movement in a Voluntary direction. Whereas Chalmers favoured the Free Church defining itself as the true Established Church in Scotland, it was the revivalists who appeared to have won the day in 1844, when the General Assembly encouraged all congregations to pray for a revival in the hope of developing gathered congregations.[48] For Chalmers, they had left the Church of Scotland after a dispute over the kind of Established Church they wanted, but by 1844 it seemed that sections of the Free Church did not see themselves as a national Church, but rather as a gathered Church of true believers which only had a responsibility to its own members. Further evidence of this at the Assembly in 1844 emerged when voices had been raised suggesting that congregations which were not self-supporting should be closed down.[49] The Free Church appeared to be moving away from Chalmers' godly commonwealth vision of churches and schools for everyone, and outbursts like the above

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47 W. Hanna, *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. iv, p.394.

48 S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, pp.346-347. *The Witness*, (24 May, 1844); *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1844) pp.36-40.

49 S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, p.347. W. Hanna, *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. iv, pp.368-376.

contradicted the object of his Sustentation Fund.[50] It was evident that Chalmers hoped his territorial plan would at least remind sections within the Free Church of just why they had left the Church of Scotland.[51]

It was somewhat ironic then that Chalmers stressed the need for cooperation with other denominations if the scheme was to be a success. Chalmers predicted that through cooperation Protestants would develop mutual respect and understanding, which would allow them to put aside their denominational differences while paving the way towards Presbyterian union. If any of Chalmers' plans seemed utopian, this was the one. The Disruption had unleashed bitter feelings that were not going to disappear overnight, and nowhere was this more heartfelt than within the Church of Scotland whose support would have helped immensely in achieving his plans for Edinburgh. While recognising that the Free Church would find it difficult to cooperate with the government, and by implication the Church of Scotland, Chalmers placed greater faith in the fact that "nine tenths of the evangelical Dissenters of Scotland are Presbyterians; why should not they lose sight of their minor differences?"[52] It was a nice idea, but not one that could realistically be achieved. Chalmers overlooked the fact that Voluntary Presbyterian Churches would not be interested in joining with him to create an alternative Established Church and that the Church of Scotland, although badly wounded by the Disruption, was not an irrelevance on the ecclesiastical scene.

To Chalmers, any attempt to foster churchgoing would only be achieved by a system of territorial rather than congregational churches, as the former was

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50 The Sustentation Fund was Thomas Chalmers' plan to finance the Free Church's ministry. By this plan, congregations throughout the country sent what they had raised directly to a central fund in Edinburgh. In return, each congregation received an Equal Dividend, although the cost of living in certain areas was also taken into account. Chalmers' plan was a sensible policy if the Free Church was determined to encourage fairness and a belief that it was a truly *national* Church.

51 *The Witness*, (26 June,1844).

52 *The Witness*, (13 July,1844).

intrinsically aggressive in character while the latter was merely attractive.[53] Similarly, Chalmers realised that the average parish size was simply too large for any minister to oversee effectively. Consequently, the first principle in his system of local churches was that the population in each church's territory should not be in excess of 2,000 individuals or 400 families.[54] This would ensure that each area was of a manageable size and could be aggressively evangelised. Chalmers insisted that he had experienced great success in Glasgow while at the Tron and St. John's churches.[55] As the St. John's experiment had been clouded in accusations that the congregation did not predominantly comprise parish residents, it was not surprising that Chalmers insisted upon a strictly local system in Edinburgh.[56] After considerable experience of home-mission work, Chalmers recognised that only through the aggressive system could a church hope to seek out and persuade those outwith organised religion to attend.[57] This naturally required considerable effort, and those who preferred the gentler life were quick to round on Chalmers and dismiss his plan as speculative or idealistic. Chalmers, struggling for his continued influence as a social theorist, was not slow in denying such accusations.[58]

To work alongside the territorial missionary a lay agency would be recruited. This agency would help set up day and evening schools, reading rooms, laundries, savings banks and other agencies which in the long-term would help to create a self-supporting congregation run by and for the working class. Chalmers considered the benefit of the aggressive over the attractive church to be self-evident, but he realised that there would be many who opposed

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53 For a fuller discussion of Chalmers' methods see T. Chalmers, *Churches and Schools for the Working Classes* (Edinburgh,1846).

54 Ibid., p.9.

55 *The Witness*, (19 June,1844).

56 For a fuller discussion of the St. John's experiment see S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, pp.91-151.

57 T. Chalmers, *Churches and Schools for the Working Classes*, p.5.

58 *The Witness*, (19 June,1844).

his plan to have education funded from fees in what were generally poor areas.[59] It had long been the philosophy in Scotland that education was only valued if it was paid for, and Chalmers valued this principle as highly as anyone.

> Now, what I want to establish is a system of education, founded on the basis of the popular habit, - the habit of injuring the population to pay for the education of their children, and which would have the effect of transmitting the interest in education from father to son, and so make it a fixture, just as we made it a fixture in the Gallowgate of Glasgow.[60]

Having laid out the basis of his communal ideal, Chalmers announced that he had commenced an experiment in the West Port district in the city's Old Town which would demonstrate the practicality of his proposals. In choosing the West Port Chalmers had made a courageous choice, as what St. John's had been to the skilled artisan the West Port was to the rootless poor. Chalmers no doubt realised that there could be little opposition to the territorial plan being implemented elsewhere if his plan could be shown to work in the area where the notorious Burke and Hare had murdered their victims only sixteen years before. In an effort to adapt the communal ideal to the Scotland of the new Poor Law, Chalmers made a crucial alteration to the operation of his territorial plan. Unlike at St. John's, there would be no distribution of poor relief at the West Port. In fact, Chalmers now argued that providing such pecuniary aid merely stood in the way of the recipient's religious conversion, which he believed was the true path to lasting social improvement. "The salvation of a single soul is of far greater consequence than the deliverance of an empire from those evils of pauperism which are merely temporal."[61]

Although Chalmers discouraged his agents at the West Port from giving money to those they visited, he did impress upon them their ability to find employment for those who needed work. Until the West Port congregation

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59 T. Chalmers, *Churches and Schools for the Working Classes*, p.5.

60 Ibid., p.8.

61 *The Witness*, (26 June,1844). West Port residents were able to receive money from the new Poor Law when it was introduced in 1845.

became self-supporting, Chalmers recognised that his agents would come largely from the middle class, and he emphasised their ability to finance essential church and school building.[62] The fact that he expected the working class of the West Port eventually to take over the administration of the church from the middle class, was an improvement on the St. John's experiment, in which the working class were expected to be permanently led.[63]

Before Chalmers began his mission in the West Port, James Ewan, a paid agent of the City Mission, had already been working in the area, and Chalmers wasted no time in securing his assistance to what he had planned for the district. With Ewan's help the area was divided into twenty territorial proportions. Procuring the agents proved so problematic that they were able to recruit only ten agents by the first meeting of the West Port Local Society on 27 July 1844.[64] A census conducted by Chalmers in September 1844 revealed that irreligion was widespread in the area. It appeared that only forty-five of the 411 families in the West Port were connected to a Protestant Church, and a further seventy families were adherents of the Roman Catholic Church. Out of 400 children of school age, moreover, only 112 actually attended school.[65]

In January 1845, Chalmers was forced to drop plans to install Ewan as the ordained West Port minister when it was discovered that he had taken a bribe while arbitrating a dispute between two West Port inhabitants.[66] In February 1845, Chalmers invited William Tasker, a student at New College, to undertake the job of missionary at the West Port.[67] Tasker had been a teacher in Perth before resigning at the Disruption because of his Free Church sympathies, and

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62 Ibid.

63 See S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, pp.91-151.

64 Ibid., p.355.

65 W. Hanna, *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. iv, pp.394-395.

66 S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, p.359., Edinburgh City Minutes, 5 February (NLS, Acc 7247,2); T. Chalmers to City Mission Directors, 27 February 1845 (TCP, CHA 5, West Port Box).

67 For a fuller discussion of Tasker's career see J. Jolly, *Memorials of the Reverend William Tasker* (Edinburgh,1880).

had thereafter been accepted to New College to study for the ministry. After his first session at the College Tasker spent a summer as missionary at Port Glasgow, and before the end of the following session Chalmers decided he was to be the leader of the West Port mission. It must have been a daunting prospect for Tasker. Chalmers was risking his reputation at the West Port and would have expected only the highest standards and results from the missionary he had hand-picked. Nevertheless, by the time of his death, Tasker had responded so successfully to the challenge given to him by Chalmers, that it could be asserted

> What a Candlish was in the Church Courts, a Cunningham in the Professorial Chair, a Duff in the Foreign Mission Field, Mr. Tasker was in the Home Mission and Territorial Field.[68]

Tasker began his duties on the first Sunday of April 1845, and was later to recall how discouraged he felt while going about his work in the West Port after the payment of the poor relief, with its resultant increase in the level of drunkenness among the area's inhabitants.[69] Although Chalmers and Tasker may have felt they were offering the West Port residents a vital service, their presence was sufficiently unwelcome to a number of the residents of the district for them to require police protection in the mission hall on Sunday evenings.[70] While visiting, Tasker regularly discovered between twenty and thirty people living in a single house. A quarter of the area's inhabitants were on poor relief.[71]

Once the system of visitation had been established, Chalmers turned his attention to creating a school for the West Port's inhabitants. In October 1844, Alexander Sinclair accepted Chalmers' invitation to be the district school teacher, and on 11 November 1844 the West Port school was opened.[72] The school was held in an old disused tannery, and the district visitors encouraged parents to send their children. Although it was Chalmers' aim "to train up the families in

68 Ibid., p.31.

69 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record for the Free Church of Scotland*, (December 1850) p.151.

70 Ibid.

71 W. Hanna, *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. iv, p.395.

72 Ibid., pp.401-403.

the sentiment that education is worth its price, and to win them to the paying of that price" he also made it known to Sinclair that no child was to be refused admission because of inability to pay fees.[73] The school consisted of a boys school, a girls school and an evening school for adolescents with sixty pupils.[74] The school fees were a modest 2s per quarter for the day school, and 1/6d for the evening school. By 1846, there were 250 pupils, most of whom Chalmers publicly claimed were paying fees. In reality, the situation was a little different. Between November 1844 and March 1846, the majority of pupils at the school had their education paid for by the West Port Local Society.[75]

In December 1844, new programmes were added, including a laundry room and a bleaching green for dying clothes. In April of the following year a district library was opened, and in May a nursery school was added. It had been Chalmers' intention that each visitor would establish a sabbath school within their proportion, but the visitors were so heavily burdened with other duties that only three sabbath schools were in operation by September 1845. This disappointment meant a fresh start had to be made in October 1845, leading to the creation of a West Port Sabbath School Society of twenty-two voluntary teachers. This new agency appeared to have the desired effect and by March 1846, the sabbath schools had some 150 people in their care.[76]

Between 1844 and 1845, Chalmers published three articles in the *North British Review*, in which he portrayed his communal ideal as the best solution possible to the moral, social and economic problems of the working class.[77] It

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73 Ibid., p.399., and S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, p.358.

74 Ibid., pp.401-404., and *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record for the Free Church of Scotland*, (December,1847) pp.268-270.

75 T. Chalmers, *Churches and Schools for the Working Classes*, pp.9-10. S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, p.358., Extract from West Port Local Society minutes, 21 March 1846 (TCP, CHA 5, West Port Box).

76 S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, p.358. 'Teachers in the West Port Sabbath Schools, 24 June 1846' (TCP, CHA 5, West Port Box).

77 T. Chalmers, 'The Political Economy of the Bible', *North British Review*, iii (November,1844), pp.1-52; T. Chalmers, 'Report on the Poor Laws of Scotland', *North British Review*, iv (February,1845), pp.471-513; T. Chalmers, 'Savings Banks', *North British Review*, vi (August,1845), pp.318-344.

was Chalmers' hope that the new Poor Law Bill would be similar to the defeated Poor Law Bill advocated by the Whig M.P. for Ayrshire, Thomas Francis Kennedy. Kennedy had argued that assessment-based poor relief should be abolished, but his Bill failed after people, including Chalmers, realised that his scheme would be compulsory for every parish.[78] In the 1840s, Chalmers wanted his scheme to be permissive rather than mandatory. To Chalmers, this would allow those areas that favoured an alternative scheme, presumably the one advocated by himself, to opt out of the legal system.[79] Allied to his trepidation at the consequences of the new Poor Law, in another article he outlined the importance savings banks would play in his territorial system. Chalmers acknowledged that the new Poor Law would establish a safety net to prevent people falling into abject poverty, but this would also lead many to a hand-to-mouth existence in which they would recklessly spend what they had safe in the knowledge that they could claim poor relief. Only the widespread adoption of savings banks would prevent a growing dependence on the State which would destroy the virtues of independence, self-help and respectability.

> If our aim be a universal common education, there must be schools everywhere; or a universal Christian education, and there must be churches everywhere; or a universally well-conditioned people, through the medium of higher wages and by the operation of their own general economy, and we must have Savings Banks everywhere. The national is an aggregate of the local; and ere the good we are prosecuting be sensibly national, the local must be sufficiently multiplied.[80]

Chalmers' commitment to the savings bank as a valuable auxiliary to the local church and school, led in May 1845 to the creation of a West Port Savings Bank for the exclusive use of the area's inhabitants. Visitors collected penny-a-week deposits from subscribers, and once an individual had raised a shilling

78 R.A. Cage, *The Scottish Poor Law 1745-1845*, pp.118-121.

79 T. Chalmers, 'Report on the Poor Laws of Scotland' , pp.471-513.

80 T. Chalmers, 'Savings Banks', p.336.

then an account was taken out in their name at the National Security Savings Bank.[81] In its efforts to stimulate self-reliance the Bank had some success. By January 1846 there were some sixty individual accounts, and some 236 deposits were made between 3 January and 23 December 1846.[82] By the beginning of 1846, the mission had made sufficient progress for Chalmers to begin a programme of fund-raising with the aim of building a permanent church for the growing congregation, which would also be large enough to accommodate the school and other congregational agencies the mission boasted. After a year of fund-raising the church was completed and opened in early 1847. Within a few months Chalmers had died and the West Port church was left to survive without its father figure. Nevertheless, the foundations for a successful congregation had been established. The General Assembly sanctioned the new West Port charge in 1847, and Tasker was ordained as the church's first minister shortly after.[83] From the beginning the West Port mission attracted enormous publicity, but how successful could it claim to have been?

Integral to the scheme's success was the creation of a large territorial agency to undertake the running of the extensive operations which the mission conducted, and this has rightly been seen as one aspect where the experiment fell down.[84] Increasingly the middle class became unwilling to endanger themselves in one of the most degraded areas of Scotland, and visitors were quickly disheartened. If Chalmers had been looking for any sign of middle-class reluctance then he should have taken note from his appeal for male and female visitors at one of his public lectures in 1844. Following his impassioned speech, only one person, William Marshall, bothered to leave his name and address, and he was soon appointed Treasurer of the West Port Local Society.[85] It has already

81 T. Chalmers, *Churches and Schools for the Working Classes,* p.16.

82 Ibid., p.12.

83 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1847) p.294., p.296., p.314.

84 S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth,* p.361.

85 J. Jolly, *The Story of the West Port Church* (Edinburgh,1880), p.59.

been noted how difficult it was to find the requisite twenty visitors, and by September 1846 the lack of visitors had forced the Society to reduce the number of its proportions from twenty to fourteen. However, this did not solve the problem and in the same month the society met for the last time; thereafter, the practice of visiting ceased.[86]

Although three of the initial ten visitors were working-class residents of the West Port, it would have helped if Chalmers had done more to recruit members of the working class to be his agents. They might have shared a common language with those they were attempting to evangelise. However, Chalmers placed his confidence on the ability of the middle class to provide funding and to lead the working class. "It is surely the part of the upper and middle classes to meet even more than half-way such rising aspirations on the part of the humbler classes in society;..."[87] Whatever the difficulties experienced with the visitors, it did not prevent Tasker emerging as something of an expert on the subject of visitation. As somebody in the battle against evil, Tasker felt the visitor was, "bearing a part to stem the tide of social degeneracy and national degradation and destruction..."[88] It was indicative of the level of publicity which the West Port generated that Tasker's *Territorial Visitors Manual*, which was first published in 1849, ran to no less than five editions and was also translated into a handbook for German home-mission work.[89] Middle-class reluctance to act as visitors would not be an insurmountable obstacle to the future operation of the territorial system, however, if other areas learned from the West Port's mistakes and made a greater attempt to recruit members of the working class as visitors.

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86 S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, p.361. Extract from West Port Local Society minutes, 6 September 1846; T. Chalmers to the Secretary of the WPLS, 26 September 1846 (TCP, CHA 5, West Port Box).

87 T. Chalmers, *Churches and Schools for the Working Classes*, p.30. S.J. Brown 'The Disruption and Urban Poverty: Thomas Chalmers and the West Port Operation in Edinburgh 1844-47', p.72.

88 W. Tasker, *Territorial Visitors Manual* (Edinburgh,1849), p.42. See also Tasker's, *Territorial Sabbath Schools* (Edinburgh,1850).

89 J. Jolly, *The Story of the West Port Church*, p.52.

From the outset, one of the most vocal objections raised against the West Port was that it would attract members from other churches rather than nurture a congregation from the non-churchgoers in the neighbourhood. Chalmers emphatically rejected this objection. "There might be jealousies, if we meant to fill churches at the expense of previously existing congregations; but we do not want that. Our system is such, that it creates new customers."[90] Initially there were many from outwith the area who were attracted to the West Port, or rather to Chalmers, but it appeared that such people were no longer attracted to the church after his death and as William Tasker increasingly stamped his own personality on the experiment.[91]

Although Chalmers declared publicly that he only knew of ten conversions at the West Port in 1845, this figure should not be used as evidence of the West Port mission's failure to evangelise the district. When Chalmers announced this figure, he did not mention the fact that the forenoon attendance at the mission averaged between sixty and seventy, and the afternoon attendance some 150.[92] Who then, were all these people who had been so enthusiastic to attend church that the mission from the start had operated three Sunday services?[93] Admittedly, some would have come from outwith the area, but the success of the mission relied on people not coming to the church from elsewhere and so they were actively discouraged from doing so. It is a testimony to Chalmers' belief in the efficacy of the system that he was not in the least discouraged even if he did believe there had only been ten converts. Instead, Chalmers clung to what can best be described as a trickle-down theory of conversion. "I would wish them to understand, that for every man that is converted, there is a sort of guarantee, that perhaps fifty others will be elevated

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90 T. Chalmers, *Churches and Schools for the Working Classes*, p.14.

91 J. Jolly, *The Story of the West Port Church*, pp.30-31.

92 T. Chalmers, *Churches and Schools for the Working Classes*, p.12 and p.16.

93 Ibid., p.15.

somewhat in the morality of their habits."[94] For a congregation that was ultimately to number 1,100 communicants, too much importance should not be placed on Chalmers' early prediction of only ten conversions.[95]

In 1850, Tasker was in a position to reveal that there were some 411 families or 2,055 individuals living in the West Port, and of these, ninety-one families or 455 people were either members or adherents of his church. It also appeared that there were some 135 families or 675 people connected to other churches. Therefore, the 1,130 who were at least connected to some church, outnumbered the 925 residents Tasker believed were not affiliated to any denomination. In all, Tasker calculated that some twenty-five families or 125 people had been connected to the church and subsequently left the city to live elsewhere. When the 125 individuals who died in connection with the church were added to the equation, Tasker claimed that the West Port church in five years had been able to encourage more than 1,000 inhabitants in the area to join the church.[96] When looked at in terms of Chalmers' ten conversions this figure must surely have been beyond both his and Tasker's most sanguine expectations.

The achievement of the mission in elevating the social condition of the West Port area is more difficult to quantify. Among those who became connected to the mission and then the church, there was a common desire to move away from the area of their former degradation. In addition to the twenty-five families that moved out of Edinburgh, there were another thirty-six families who relocated to other areas of the city, but who continued to worship at the West Port.[97] As well as a desire to rid themselves of former temptations, a number would also have moved because of alternative job opportunities elsewhere. Whatever their motivation for relocating, the high levels of residential and

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94 Ibid., p.16.

95 J. Jolly, *The Story of the West Port Church*, p.74.

96 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record for the Free Church of Scotland*, (December,1850) pp.151-153.

97 Ibid., p.151.

employment mobility during the nineteenth century would repeatedly cast doubt on the ability of territorial churches to improve, in the long-term, the general social conditions of the area they were operating in.

The most outstanding accomplishment of the West Port operation lay in the success of its schools. In 1850, there was an average attendance of 330 at the day school, and a further 140 at the evening school.[98] By 1850, there were also sabbath schools for both children and adults which were overseen by some thirty teachers.[99] The savings bank had also grown. In 1850, a total of 1,814 deposits were made amounting to £132 while Tasker felt the amount would have been nearer £2,000 had it not been for the seventeen drinking houses in the area.[100] None the less, the West Port operation had helped to close three of the twenty pubs that were in the area when the mission began. This, Tasker claimed, was from a want of sale owing to the number of conversions they had made, rather than because of any pressure asserted on the official authorities. Indeed, Tasker believed that the authorities had not done enough to tackle the area's chronic intemperance problem.[101]

> But we are reluctantly compelled to complain, that the authorities not only suffer physical and social evils to obstruct us, but even *actively* throw barriers in our way. Unprincipled provision-dealers may be seen vending their goods every Lord's-day under the eye of the police, by any who choose to walk along our street; whisky-houses may be seen blazing with gas, with men and women crowding out and in every evening; and low-lodging houses gather the refuse of the population, especially at the lower end of the Port - the parties whom the benevolent, *who will not learn*, have supplied and daily supply with the means of polluting the West Port, and tormenting the industrious and well-disposed families.[102]

It was an early, but salient warning of the territorial churches' inability to provide all the solutions to the problems of a modern city without help from

98 Ibid., pp.152-153.

99 Ibid., p.153.

100 Ibid.

101 G. Bell, *Blackfriars' Wynd Analysed* (Edinburgh,1973), pp.43-44.

102 Ibid., p.43.

either local or central government. Essentially, Chalmers had been striving to recreate a situation similar to his childhood in the small burgh of Anstruther where the community was at one, living, working and worshipping alongside each other. Chalmers believed that they had the ability to bring about both spiritual and national renewal if the territorial church idea was implemented throughout the country. This vision of a godly commonwealth had a considerable history in Scotland. *The First Book of Discipline* (1560) and *Second Book of Discipline* (1578) had asserted Scotland's preference for local solutions to local problems.[103] By carrying this ideological thread into the nineteenth century, Chalmers emerged as yet another Scottish communitarian who recognised the tendency of State solutions to be both impersonal and highly centralised.

More importantly, Chalmers realised that no State system would be able to improve the spiritual condition of the country which, as a true Evangelical, was the principal object of his plan. Thus, while central government found it ideologically difficult to justify intervention, Chalmers appeared to have a ready solution to the social and religious needs of a modern city. Although it is difficult to ascertain any measurable improvement in the West Port area, it was only to be expected that those who found themselves socially mobile would wish to move out of the neighbourhood. After all, Chalmers' entire plan was geared towards respectability, self-help and individual improvement. Having achieved this, how could he possibly stand in the way of their further advancement? The idea of a West Port lad o' pairts would have seemed remote before the mission began, but the success of its schools provided a generation of West Port children with at least the possibility of social improvement.

One difficulty with the West Port operation had clearly been the financial cost of running the scheme. It has been calculated that in the first sixteen months of the scheme's existence it received and spent at least £1,137 in donations alone,

103 S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth*, introduction p.15.

which was far beyond what Chalmers predicted the mission would cost.[104] However, the real cost was not likely to act as a deterrent against the further adoption of the scheme because Chalmers was secretive about the cost of the operation. In addition, it can be argued that the mission was likely to require more money from sympathetic benefactors than missions elsewhere, given the poverty in the West Port.

The West Port experiment generated considerable publicity which was almost entirely favourable. Initially, much of this had been because of Chalmers' involvement, but even after his death, the apparent success of the experiment guaranteed further exposure. Even the United Presbyterian Church's *The Christian Journal*, the organ of a Voluntary Church, felt the mission held more attractions than the much vaunted Crystal Palace. Having visited it, they remained convinced of the ideal's viability to be implemented throughout the country.

> We have in this successful experiment at West-Port, a fresh proof that humanity cannot sink to such a state of moral degradation, with its tremendous accumulation of guilt, as shall place its recovery beyond the reach of the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God to salvation.[105]

Whatever the limitations of the West Port experiment, and it was not without them, to great numbers of ministers who were anxiously searching for a way of asserting themselves in an industrial, urban society, the territorial system increasingly appeared tailor-made. All that remained was for others to respond to the challenge and implement it elsewhere.

v. The Home Mission Committee

Whatever the West Port mission's achievement, it was some time before it was emulated to anything like the extent Chalmers had expected. Quite simply, there was a distinct lack of Chalmersesque figures willing to take the initiative, and

104 Ibid, p.362.

105 *The Christian Journal*, (November,1851) p.493.

any official lead from Edinburgh was unlikely because the Home Mission Committee found itself initially weighed down by responsibilities to existing members which militated against it launching a campaign to evangelise those outwith the Church.[106] After the Disruption, the Free Church decided to restrict the Home Mission Committee's operations solely to encouraging and aiding young men entering the ministry by means of a system of competitive bursaries.[107] If the events of 1843 were to be justified, then it was imperative that those who joined the Free Church were not denied the very basic requirement of a minister. Within a few months the shortage of ministers was so acute that the Committee was forced to supply congregations with men who had yet to complete their training.[108] Consequently, the need to increase the numbers of Free Church ministers became one which was expected to absorb all the Home Mission Committee's funds.[109]

> Should the present intense desire be suffered to wear itself out unsatisfied, what danger of a reaction! If the people, once led to look for ordinances from the Free Church, and to attach themselves to her communion, should find their hopes disappointed, what danger of their either settling down into a deeper indifference than before, or else running into wild and extravagant courses, scarcely less injurious to the interests of religion![110]

In 1845, Robert Candlish, convener of the Home Mission Committee, complained at the unwillingness of probationers to put their services at the disposal of his Committee.[111] This reluctance worsened the situation in Orkney and the Shetlands where the Free Church was already almost destitute of ministers, and where local congregations were becoming frustrated over their inability to compete with southern congregations in attracting the services of

106 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1843) p.153.
107 Ibid.
108 Ibid., p.154.
109 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record for the Free Church of Scotland*, (October,1843) p.54.
110 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1843) p.155.
111 Ibid., (1845) p.225.

first-rate probationers. The Assembly in 1845 tried to remove these organisational problems by relieving the Committee of the burden of attracting young men to the ministry, giving the burden instead to the Bursaries Committee which was better suited to undertake the work because of its connection to New College.[112] It was also decided to give the Home Mission Committee a wider jurisdiction by officially making the Gaelic Committee part of it, so that the Committee's purview covered the whole of Scotland.[113]

In 1846, the Assembly decided to amalgamate the Home Mission Committee with the Church Extension branch of the Sustentation Fund in order to create a Home Mission and Church Extension Committee.[114] The work of both Committees had been too closely linked to justify them operating separately, and by incorporating them the Free Church edged closer to inaugurating a coordinated programme of urban mission and church extension. How this programme would be accomplished no longer seemed such an obstacle as the West Port experiment generated such favourable examination. The Moderator, Robert Brown, in his pastoral address in 1846, expressed a desire to see the communal ideal implemented elsewhere than simply the West Port.

> And we long to see the general adoption of that truly wise and philanthropic scheme, which has already been brought into partial operation in some of the most destitute districts of our large cities, and which has for its object the reclaiming of the most degraded and wretched of our people, by means of a system of Christian agency, superintended by a faithful minister, and furnished with a Church and School for every two thousand souls. Without some such scheme we shall only act on the surface of society, and can never reach its depths. We may attract the willing to our places of worship, but we leave the unwilling to themselves; and we must expect no spontaneous movement on their part to the house of prayer.[115]

James Begg, in his one year as convener of the Home Mission Committee, recognised the need for a radical change in the Committee's organisation, after

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112 Ibid., (1846) p. 170.

113 Ibid.

114 Ibid., p.209.

115 *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1846) pp.92-93.

discovering from congregational returns that there were still some 232 parishes which had neither a Free church nor a mission station.[116] Begg explained to the Assembly in 1848 that there were four Committees connected to the Home Mission Committee, namely for the support of licentiates and catechists in stations, the encouragement of Gaelic preaching, the distribution of probationers, and the appointment of evangelistic deputations to areas without a settled ministry.[117] To Begg, the biggest difficulty with the existing arrangement was that although all affiliated to the Home Mission Committee, each of them was actually separate from it and had their own conveners. Therefore, although the Home Mission Committee was each Committee's paymaster, it had absolutely no control over how they spent the money. For Begg, the most expedient solution was to place them under the control of the Home Mission Committee, and create an entirely separate Gaelic Committee which would be more understanding and responsive to the requirements of the Highlands and Islands.[118] Begg also acknowledged that it would be almost impossible for the Committee to enter into a period of extensive mission work while it had the responsibility for paying preachers, and so he recommended such matters being decided entirely between stations and presbyteries.[119] More importantly, Begg calculated that the Home Mission Committee would be 75% better off as opposed to £2,000 in debt, if they could prevent congregations continually looking to Edinburgh for funding.[120]

With the exception of a separate Gaelic Committee, the General Assembly agreed to Begg's proposals, and so instead of the Committee giving money to probationers and catechists, with a few exceptions, it would be given to individual stations according to their needs. However, rather than drain the Committee's reserves, stations were instructed to send what they had raised

116 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1848) p.227.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid., p.228.
119 Ibid.
120 Ibid., p.231.

directly to Edinburgh where it would be returned to them, and if necessary be supplemented with a grant from the Committee.[121] It was hoped the new regulations would not only stimulate self-reliance in the localities, but also enable the Home Mission Committee to inaugurate new movements where they were most needed.

The growing acceptance that urban social problems were not going to disappear exclusively because of the new Poor Law created a greater willingness to accept the basic elements of Chalmers' territorial plan. At the height of the Poor Law debate in the early 1840s, supporters of Alison and Chalmers generally stood divided in believing only in the practicality of their own scheme. As the 1840s progressed, the cost of poor relief spiralled, without seemingly making any significant impact in alleviating the social problems that plagued Scotland. In this environment an increasing number began to recognise that the views of Alison and Chalmers were not mutually exclusive. Thomas Guthrie, Free Church minister at the St. John's church in Edinburgh felt that "The two schemes may go hand in hand; nay, more, - like the twins of Siam, the presence of the one should ensure the company of the other;..."[122] By integrating Alison's call for a strong Poor Law with Chalmers' vision of the territorial church, Guthrie felt they could enjoy the best of both worlds. "Under the self-same roof the temporal and moral wants of our forlorn poor are provided for..."[123]

By May 1849, the peripatetic nature of the central Home Mission Committee had become a source of anxiety to those presbyteries that were most affected by urban social problems. Consequently, the General Assembly in 1849 heard several overtures on the Evangelization and Bible Self-Elevation of the Masses from the Synods of Aberdeen, Glasgow and Ayr and the Presbytery of Edinburgh.[124] The concern in the Presbytery of Edinburgh had been growing

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121 Ibid., p.312.

122 T. Guthrie, *A Plea For Ragged Schools* (Edinburgh,1847), p.34

123 Ibid.

124 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1849) p.70.

steadily, and was encouraged by Andrew Sym's address to it as the new convener of the Home Mission Committee in December 1848. During his speech, Sym castigated those who stood aside, engaging in denominational disputes and petty rivalries while irreligion marched on unchecked.[125] As the Home Mission Committee's convener, Sym, authoritatively told the presbytery, the best scheme available to them was that of the West Port territorial operation. Having largely convinced the Presbytery of Edinburgh, Sym carried his message to the Assembly in 1849, proclaiming that it was time for the Committee to take the initiative as "every year is rendering their recovery, humanly speaking, more hopeless, nothing, or next to nothing, has been practically done to meet the acknowledged and gigantic, and already almost insurmountable evil."[126]

Despite the growing concern of the urban Free Church that their requirements were not being being properly responded to, it was not the only area which was beginning to express disgruntlement at the Home Mission Committee's apparent indifference. While reading the Gaelic Committee report in 1849, Dr. Mackintosh Mackay of the Dunoon Free church and Moderator in the same year, expressed the discontent and anger that was felt in Gaelic areas. Mackay's resentment was supported by several overtures from Highland presbyteries which complained at how little had been done to prevent destitution in the Highlands, and expressed their preference for an entirely separate Gaelic Committee. It was apparent that their desire for such a Committee was largely motivated by a belief that what the Highlands and Islands received did not reflect the depth of their giving to the Church's schemes.[127]

Without doubt the existing structures were hopelessly inadequate in enabling the Committee to respond to the variety of localised problems in Scotland. If the Highlands were not to be left behind in the attempt to reform the

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125 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record for the Free Church of Scotland,* (December,1848) pp.556-557.

126 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1849) p.72.

127 Ibid., p.84.

cities, a change had to be made. In an effort to quell accusations of favouritism, James Begg rightly explained that the problem in the Highlands was one of finding ministers for existing congregations; whereas in the Lowlands it was the destitution of people who were outwith the Church altogether.[128] Begg continued to support the idea of a separate Gaelic Committee, and hoped that concerned parties in the cities would then take up the territorial legacy left by Chalmers to elevate those who were outwith the Church.[129] The General Assembly was now convinced that the existing arrangement was seriously flawed, and so agreed to a separate Gaelic Committee which would alternate an annual collection with the Home Mission Committee.[130] Although this dispute had resulted in an unsavoury display of the regional tensions within the Free Church, it was the only practical decision which could benefit both the Highlands and the Lowlands. Similarly, the General Assembly approved Begg's overture on the Evangelization of the Masses and instructed those presbyteries with large populations in them to adopt any practical measure to take the Gospel to those outwith the Church.[131] With the House of Lords having decided in the Church of Scotland's favour on the question of the *quoad sacra* churches, it was important that the Free Church made every effort to prevent any weakening of its home-mission commitments.

It was something of a disappointment then that in 1850 Sym was forced to complain that they had only been able to help those areas which had expressed an interest, and had as yet done nothing for the irreligious masses in large towns.[132] To Sym, it was the Committee's financial predicament that was preventing the implementation of the territorial plan elsewhere.[133] The

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128 Ibid., p.98.

129 Ibid., p.99 and p.104.

130 Ibid., p.105. *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1849) pp.92-93.

131 *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1849) p.132.

132 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1850) p.146.

133 Ibid., p.147.

Committee's position had certainly not been helped by the Highland Committee having received the first of the Assembly's alternative annual collections, and in an almost apocalyptic piece of emotional blackmail, Sym spoke of the disastrous consequences if the Home Mission Committee's collection did not provide sufficient resources for them to meet the cities' needs.[134] In a thinly veiled criticism of the popularity of foreign missions, Sym argued that if they could conquer the "heathen" at home it would lead to greater success overseas.[135] This soon became a regular complaint from those involved in home-mission work, who felt that their work was slighted because it lacked the glamour of overseas missions.

Just as the Free Church had little confidence in the Church of Scotland responding to what it saw as the urban crisis, its belief in the effectiveness of the City Mission agency was also waning rapidly. The City Mission had been one of the earliest attempts to tackle the problem of Christianity in an urban context. City Missions had been formed in Glasgow in 1826 and Edinburgh in 1832. However, after operating for over twenty years, complaints began to emerge that the City Mission was an agency which operated on the cheap, and which would fail dismally to make any impression on irreligion because it was not organised thoroughly.[136] Increasingly, the problem of non-churchgoing seemed so vast that it was considered futile to send a city missionary into the dark recesses of a city, and expect him to make even the slightest impact on irreligion and poverty. Although their noble efforts were appreciated, it had become difficult to ascertain just what the City Missions had managed to accomplish. People now looked for a system that would be more efficient, thorough and relentless; in short, the territorial method. The Free Church recognised its need to become more outward looking.

The church must be roused from her selfishness - made to awake

134 Ibid., p.146.

135 Ibid., p.147 and p.149.

136 *The Free Church Magazine*, (December,1848) p.374.

> and arise from the dust. She must be ready to throw her *heart* into the cause of the masses, and prepared to endure suffering and reproach, if need be, in this great work, otherwise it must fail. Mere dabbling in Home Missions will never do.[137]

With the West Port experiment generally accepted as a success, the Free Church appeared to possess a formula for undertaking an urban mission which could not be described as merely "dabbling" at evangelization. Since 1843, although there had been enthusiastic supporters of the territorial method among its membership, the Home Mission Committee had been hamstrung by organisational difficulties which prevented it from inaugurating a territorial campaign to the extent they would have liked. At each Assembly these constraints were annually removed, but this had repeatedly heralded nothing but a succession of false dawns for the territorial system. However, the General Assembly in 1851 was to make another crucial structural change to the Home Mission Committee which finally marked the beginning of 'take off' for territorialism when it created an independent Committee on Glasgow Evangelization.

Conclusion

After the Disruption it was only natural that the Free Church's initial priority was towards meeting the needs of those who had stood so resolutely by their Evangelical principles at the Disruption. It was only by building their own churches, schools, manses and divinity college that the Free Church could prove to the government and the Church of Scotland that their decision to go it alone had been more than simply a noble gesture. Only after this had been accomplished could the Free Church turn its attention towards those outwith the Church. Although there is no evidence to suggest that the rural population was any better in their observance of church attendance than their urban counterparts, to city ministers from all denominations the stability and

137 Ibid., (April,1851) p.118.

tranquillity of rural communities stood in stark contrast to the urban masses who appeared indifferent to church attendance. The concentration of mass intemperance and what appeared to be a declining public respect for the sabbath were just two of the foremost challenges which confronted ministers in the 1840s. Furthermore, the arrival in Scotland of Irish Catholics following the potato famine between 1845 and 1846 was viewed as a direct challenge to the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland. As the most committed Presbyterian Church, the Free Church felt that it was its duty to respond to what it saw as the Catholic hordes descending upon Scotland.

The Free Church's relations with the Established Church, meanwhile, had deteriorated further since the Disruption. If anything had demonstrated the dynamism of Evangelicalism, it was the church-extension campaign in the 1830s. To the Free Church, the 222 churches which were built between 1834 and 1841 represented more than bricks and mortar. They were also seen as shining examples of the values which Evangelicals felt would place the Church of Scotland at the heart of Scottish life, rather than the lacklustre sideshow which they believed the national Church had become under the reign of the Moderates. Thus, it was hardly surprising that the Free Church was devastated by the Civil Courts' decision to award the *quoad sacra* churches to the Church of Scotland. For the Free Church, the Church of Scotland and the State had once again discredited themselves. To the Free Church, the Church of Scotland's stubborn refusal to resolve the matter amicably and on the principle of equity, had again demonstrated that it was not worthy of the position of Scotland's Established Church. However, perhaps more serious were the implications which the decision would have on the Free Church's strength throughout the country. As the *quoad sacra* churches had been built to cater primarily for the urban centres, the decision threatened to have devastating consequences for the Free Church in the cities which it had hitherto looked upon as one of its strongholds. Therefore,

something was urgently required which would maintain Free Church members within the Church's ordinances, while also allowing it to launch an aggressive campaign against those outwith the Church.

It was at this point that Thomas Chalmers undertook again to demonstrate that his territorial scheme was capable of solving the problem of organised religion in an urban context. To his contemporaries it also appeared to be the panacea for a number of the ills which afflicted urban society. Although Chalmers had lost the Poor Law debate in the early 1840s, after 1845 it soon became clear that the new Poor Law would not radically improve society. Consequently, public sympathy for his territorial plan grew, especially in the Free Church. Such was the Free Church's renewed faith in territorialism that the General Assembly of 1851 decided to create an independent Committee on Glasgow Evangelization. More than anywhere else in Scotland, the city of Glasgow best represented the devastating forces which had been unleashed on society by industrialisation and urbanisation. It speaks volumes for the confidence which the Free Church had in territorialism that they felt it could realistically address the social problems which plagued the industrial capital of Scotland. The next chapter will analyse to what extent the territorial ideal managed to solve the massive social dislocation which Glasgow experienced, as well as exploring how it was used by the Free Church to compensate for the crippling loss of so many of its *quoad sacra* churches in the city in 1849. One thing was certain; if the territorial ideal worked in Glasgow, then there could be little complaint about it being implemented elsewhere.

CHAPTER TWO

"LET GLASGOW FLOURISH..."

THE GLASGOW EVANGELIZATION COMMITTEE, 1851-1858

If any individual could claim foremost responsibility for persuading the Free Church to create a separate Glasgow Evangelization Committee, it was Robert Buchanan. Born in 1802 at St. Ninians near Stirling, Buchanan had studied at Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities before being ordained as parish minister at Gargunnock. In 1830, he became the parish minister at Saltoun, and in 1833 he was translated to the Tron church in Glasgow. Buchanan arrived in Glasgow in time to witness the formation of the Glasgow Church Building Society, and observe at close hand its impressive work in the city. A leading Evangelical spokesman, Buchanan later documented his party's version of the Disruption in his two-volume *The Ten Years' Conflict.*[1]

Buchanan and most of his congregation were forced to relinquish the Tron parish church and school buildings at the Disruption. After holding services for a short period in the City Hall, and with the the help of some wealthy friends, Buchanan's Free Tron congregation was settled in its own church in the summer of 1844. From November 1843, moreover, the Free Tron's kirk-session rented a school at Miller's Place in the centre of the parish. At Miller's Place a day school was quickly set in operation while the school building also housed a preaching station and sabbath schools. Every second Sunday Buchanan would conduct the services himself, and these early efforts were the origins of what became the widely known Wynd mission.[2]

In March 1845, Thomas Chalmers delivered a lecture to the Free Tron congregation on the subject of 'Congregational Local Missions' which persuaded

1 R. Buchanan, *The Ten Years' Conflict* (2 vols.,Edinburgh,1849).

2 For a discussion on the Wynd mission see N.L. Walker, *Robert Buchanan D.D. An Ecclesiastical Biography* (London,1877).

the Free Tron to concentrate their missionary efforts on a small part of the Tron parish. To conduct this, the congregation recruited a former Irish Catholic priest, O'Loughlin, who was now a member of the Free Tron congregation, to work as missionary among the Roman Catholics who lived in the congregation's designated section of the parish.[3] After 1845, as a result of the Irish potato famine, the number of Catholics in Scotland grew so dramatically that by 1851, 18.2% of Glasgow's population had been born in Ireland. It was not long before Irish-born residents accounted for half the Tron population, as the area around the Tron became a principal reception centre for the Irish Catholic population in Glasgow. The appointment of O'Loughlin demonstrated a commitment to winning the Irish Catholics to Presbyterianism. At the same time, the native Protestants of the Tron were not overlooked, and Buchanan's congregation, with the Glasgow City Mission's help, recruited a divinity student, Mr Allan, to act as home missionary in the area. Further, in 1847, an Association was formed within the congregation to encourage missionary operations at both home and abroad.[4]

In January 1850, Buchanan delivered a public lecture in the Glasgow Merchants Hall, which was subsequently published under the title of *The Schoolmaster in the Wynds*.[5] Buchanan reminded his audience of the survey that Glasgow's Town Council with the help of the Glasgow Sabbath School Union had undertaken in 1846 in an attempt to discover the extent of educational need in Glasgow. The investigation revealed that only 21,656 school-age children in Glasgow's total population of 258,833 attended day schools of whatever variety. While school attendance was low throughout the city, the Tron parish showed up particularly badly in the census. Out of a population of 10,027 in the parish, 1,586 were between the ages of six and sixteen, but only 567

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3 Ibid., p.305.

4 Ibid.

5 R. Buchanan, *The Schoolmaster in the Wynds* or *How To Educate the Masses* (Edinburgh,1850).

of these children were in day schools.[6]

Following the Disruption in 1843, both the Free Tron and the Established Tron congregation maintained a school in the area. However, these two schools were simply not enough to cater for the district's educational needs.[7] To provide for the Old Wynd district of the parish, the Tron congregation had bought a disused candle manufactory and converted the building into a school at a cost of between £1,100 and £1,200.[8] In its initial stages the Wynd school's organisers hoped to succeed along the attractive principle, whereby it was hoped that people would send their children to school without any encouragement from those who ran the school, but that method only managed to attract thirty-five pupils. Such a disappointing response convinced Buchanan that they would have to seek out and persuade parents to send their children to the schools. This was the method employed by the congregation's forty-seven sabbath school teachers, who each had their own territory to visit, and who successfully recruited 741 pupils. To encourage greater attendance at the week day schools, the Tron congregation formed an Educational Association, whose members were to visit families and persuade them to send their children to the Wynd and Bridgegate day schools.[9] Buchanan divided families into two categories. First, there were the children whose parents could afford to pay fees but refused, and secondly, there were the children of parents who were either dead or too destitute to afford the fees. The Association attempted to persuade the first category of parents to change their minds, while for the second category the Wynd mission's organisers sought alternative ways to pay their fees. After visiting the Wynd district, the twenty-six visitors soon discovered that there were some 248 children whose education would have to be paid for by the Association.[10] This figure was considerably less

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6 Ibid., pp.14-16.
7 Ibid., p.18.
8 Ibid., p.19.
9 Ibid., pp.20--22.
10 Ibid., pp.23-24.

than the 1,019 children who appeared to be outwith schools when the census was conducted in 1846, although it is likely that the mission's organisers were primarily interested in catering for the very poorest children in the area.

It was not long before the benefits of a more aggressive system bore fruit. While the schools were run on the attractive principle, the collective total of pupils in the four schools was only 199, but in December 1849, after twelve months operating on the aggressive principle, the figure had risen to 363.[11] The Association had also successfully found forty-three patrons who agreed to pay for the education of 111 children from the destitute families - although the majority of the very poorest children still went without schooling.[12]

By comparing the rates of expenditure on churches and schools with the costs of pauperism and crime, Buchanan assured his audience that they would have to increase their religious and educational missions if they hoped to make any impact in reducing the costs of poor relief and criminal activity. For the year ending May 1849, in the Barony, City, Gorbals proper and Govan annexation areas of Glasgow, there had been an expenditure on the Poor Laws of £106,275 which Buchanan observed was almost three times the £36,840 spent by all denominations on ministers' and teachers' salaries.[13] Similarly, Buchanan complained that the Glasgow authorities had taken 19,094 individuals into their custody and spent £74,573 on the prevention of crime in the city in 1848.[14] To Buchanan, these outgoings were not only colossal sums, but would fail to cure what he saw as the main cause of such problems as unemployment and crime. In language reminiscent of Chalmers, Buchanan felt: "They will never be cured by either poor's rates or prisons. It is a righteous and irreversible law of Divine providence, that the *moral* rules the *economic* condition of society."[15]

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11 Ibid., p.24.
12 Ibid., p.25.
13 Ibid., pp.5-6.
14 Ibid., pp.7-9.
15 Ibid., p.32.

In his lecture, Buchanan observed that residential segregation was increasingly leaving the poor to fend for themselves. "Blythswood Hill and Bridgegate are not more than a mile apart, and yet practically, they are nearly as far asunder as the antipodes."[16] By 1850, a clear class division had appeared in the geography of Glasgow, with the east end dominated by factories and working-class housing, and the west end providing homes for the middle class and their business premises. This residential segregation was worsened by the emergence of a commercial shopping zone around Buchanan Street in the city centre. Although little could be done to prevent the relentless retreat to the suburbs, Buchanan endeavoured in his lecture to remind the middle class of what he saw as their duty to the poorest sections of society.

In 1850, James Hogg was appointed missionary to the Tron because neither Allan nor O'Loughlin could devote sufficient time to the immense task which confronted them in the area. To Buchanan's biographer, it was Hogg's appointment to the post of missionary in the Wynds and Bridgegate which marked "an epoch in the history of Home Mission work in Glasgow and other large towns throughout Scotland."[17] As well as conducting two Sunday services, Hogg would visit the inhabitants during the week, hold at least one week night prayer meeting and also oversee the other agencies which the mission conducted.[18] However, Buchanan believed that such work was only scratching at the surface of irreligion, and he was convinced that only a more coordinated, concentrated effort would do. He set about persuading the relevant Church courts, both in Glasgow and Edinburgh, that Glasgow, as the industrial capital of Scotland, was experiencing social problems on a far greater scale than anywhere else and therefore demanded an immediate and specialised response.

At the beginning of 1851, Buchanan gave a speech to the Free Presbytery of Glasgow during which he pleaded the case for increasing the level of mission

16 Ibid., p.3.

17 N.L. Walker, *Robert Buchanan D.D. An Ecclesiastical Biography*, p.307.

18 Ibid.

work throughout the city.[19] The Free Church had made a significant contribution towards meeting Glasgow's educational needs, but in Buchanan's opinion it was failing to tackle effectively the city's religious destitution. "Nowhere else in this northern kingdom does spiritual destitution present so appalling a front: nowhere else is it growing with such tremendous rapidity."[20]

The Tron district of course was no stranger to innovative and well publicised mission enterprises. After all, it had been the original testing ground for Chalmers' communal ideal between 1815-1819. As his illustrious predecessor had done before him, Buchanan undertook a census that confirmed his worst fears concerning the level of irreligion in the area. From his sample survey of three parts of the Tron parish, Buchanan discovered that only eighty-three people held church seats among a population of 3,232, and that as many as 495 of the 589 families did not attend church.[21] The result of his census convinced Buchanan that his congregation were dealing with an area in which the level of irreligion could rival anything found elsewhere in the country. When it came to proposing a solution for these conditions, Buchanan advocated what he viewed as a tried and trusted method.

> I know of nothing that will do but the scheme which Knox devised at the Reformation, and which Chalmers laboured to restore in our own day. Churches or schools upon the parochial or territorial system will, by God's blessing, give us back a humanized and Christianised population in the outfields of our city - and nothing else will.[22]

Buchanan also recognised that there was a problem in simply increasing the number of mission churches in a city like Glasgow. Mission stations were intended to operate primarily in poor areas and so there could be little likelihood, in their first few years at least, of their being self-supporting. The

19 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, (February,1851) pp.221-223.
20 Ibid., p.222.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.

ultimate aim was to create independent, territorial congregations, but before that could happen, somebody, somewhere, would have to bear the financial burden of evangelising Glasgow. For this purpose Buchanan proposed the formation of a new Free Church Glasgow Church Building Society, along the lines of the successful venture in the 1830s. The 1840s had been a period of severe economic depression, but Buchanan was convinced that wealthy Glasgow Free Church members, of whom there were many, would gladly provide the necessary money for essential church building and also help subsidise new congregations through their first few tentative years.[23]

The other problem Buchanan could foresee was how to attract ministers of sufficient energy and ability to create new congregations from the unchurched urban poor. There could be few more rewarding sights for the nineteenth-century minister than to watch a congregation emerge from an area previously unreceptive to religion; but similarly, there were few more dispiriting sights than to watch his noble efforts fall upon deaf ears. Therefore, Buchanan felt they required a financial plan which would enable congregations to attract the very best ministers without expecting them to accept a reduction in their standard of living because they were moving to a poor area. To achieve this, Buchanan argued that the money could come from two sources: partly from a sum from the Sustentation Fund and partly (for a period) from the Home Mission Committee's funds. The alternative he felt was to encourage individuals to become the financial benefactors of one or more mission stations, and Buchanan believed that Glasgow was full of such "large-hearted individuals."[24] It was evident that Buchanan's plans for Glasgow relied heavily on the wealthy, and helping to empty their pockets was certainly one way to refute allegations that the Free Church did not care for the poorest members of society who were unable to contribute towards their grand plans. Having persuaded the Free Presbytery of

23 Ibid., p.223.
24 Ibid.

Glasgow to submit an overture to the General Assembly calling for a special discussion on Glasgow's problems, it was left to Buchanan to convince the Church's supreme court that the city's needs were of such a nature as to demand swift and exceptional action.[25] Buchanan's chosen method of persuasion was to demonstrate that Glasgow had an inadequate church accommodation when compared to other cities in Scotland.[26]

William Collins, the most prominent businessman behind the Glasgow Church Building Society, calculated in 1836 that Glasgow should have had church accommodation for 60% of its population. Buchanan calculated that the city would need accommodation for 200,000 individuals if this figure was applied in 1851. In reality, only 105,000 seats were actually available.[27] For Buchanan, it was important to increase the amount of church accommodation simply to counteract the disastrous influence which he believed derived from the myriad of less wholesome attractions a city like Glasgow could offer its inhabitants. In the Tron parish alone there were as many as 115 licensed outlets, sixty-three pawn shops and thirty-three brothels. For Buchanan, given these statistics it was hardly surprising that the expenditure of £186,000 on crime and pauperism dwarfed the figure of between £36,000-38,000 that was spent annually in Glasgow on churches and schools.[28] If saving souls alone was insufficient motivation, then Buchanan pleaded with the General Assembly to act in order to save the existing social order.

> I have often shuddered in traversing the wynds of Glasgow to think that we have there in abundance the very materials with which the St Antoines and the St Marceaux of Paris have, again and

25 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1851) pp.304-315.
26 Ibid., p.306.
27 Ibid., p.307.
28 Ibid., pp.309-310.

again, fed the flames of its frequent revolutionary conflagrations.[29]

Buchanan also felt the situation in Glasgow was typical of most manufacturing towns where he believed the operatives rarely if ever ventured near their minister. Given the lack of churches in the city, Buchanan felt they should not be surprised that, "Chartist or Socialist lecture-rooms are their churches; and not unfrequently some fierce political newspaper, or other pernicious periodical, supplies their only Sabbath reading, and furnishes the only food of their minds."[30] With Chartism and the continental revolutions of 1848 still fresh in the memory, it was hardly surprising that individuals like Buchanan looked fearfully upon Glasgow, with its vast extremes of wealth and poverty, as a breeding ground for revolutionary fervour. To avoid this, Buchanan pleaded with the General Assembly that beneficial results would follow if it would only make a sustained aggressive effort, as he felt had already been demonstrated by the work undertaken by his congregation in the Wynds. Buchanan was particularly pleased that most of the 300 who attended the Wynd mission station had cast off the rags in which they first attended the station and were now decently dressed.[31] In addition to the station and schools there was an 800-volume library and a penny savings bank, which in its attempt to encourage thrift among the area's inhabitants had received 290 deposits in the space of twenty-five weeks amounting to £65,12,5. Such success convinced Buchanan that the best scheme available to the Free Church for widespread implementation was the territorial one his congregation was employing in the Wynds.[32]

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29 Ibid., p.310. See C.G. Brown, 'The Cost of Pew-renting: Church Management, Church-going and Social Class in Nineteenth-century Glasgow', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, xxxviii (1987), pp.347-361; C.G. Brown Religion and the Development of an Urban Society: Glasgow 1780-1914, Ph.D. thesis, 2 vols, University of Glasgow, (1982); P. Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class in mid-Nineteenth Century Glasgow: A Study of Nine Churches', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, xxxii (1981), pp.47-64., and his Ph.D. thesis of the same title, University of Glasgow (1978); P. Hillis, 'Education and Evangelisation: Presbyterian Missions in mid-nineteenth Century Glasgow', *Scottish Historical Review*, lxvi (1988), pp.46-62.

30 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1851) p.313.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

According to Buchanan, all that was required to demonstrate the success of the Wynd mission was an ordained minister and a church building, and the provision of those two things seemed imminent given that the proposed Glasgow Church Building Society had already captured the imagination of Glasgow's merchant princes. Since his speech to the Presbytery of Glasgow on the subject, a total of £7,236 had already been promised from only eighty-seven individuals.[33] Considering that the Building Society had still to be formally constituted, such generosity indicated that Glasgow's wealthy Free Church members were sympathetic to Buchanan's plans. As we will see, however, this sympathy would prove short-lived. Following the Disruption, the Free Church had undertaken four large expensive building funds - for churches, schools, manses and a divinity college. After operating for eight years, however, these funds had nearly fulfilled their purposes and people were receptive to a new evangelistic campaign for Glasgow. By 1851, there was an awareness within the Free Church that Glasgow was not only Scotland's most important economic centre, but was also the main destination for rural dwellers who went to the city in search of employment. In 1851, almost 56% of Glasgow's population had been born outwith the city, while Glasgow's 329,097 inhabitants represented 11.39% of the entire Scottish population. Glasgow, therefore, had to be prevented from falling further into what was seen as a moral abyss.

The need for a Free Church church building effort in Glasgow was especially acute after the House of Lords declared in the Church of Scotland's favour in the case of the *quoad sacra* churches. The effects of this decision were especially damaging in Glasgow. Whereas the Free Church in most towns and cities had been forced to relinquish at most several churches, the Free Church in Glasgow was forced to hand back sixteen churches overnight to the Established Church. Thomas Chalmers had assured the Parliamentary Sites Committee in 1847 that seven-eighths of the money given for erecting *quoad sacra* churches in

33 Ibid., p.312.

Scotland was subscribed by individuals who subsequently joined the Free Church.[34] While this may have been an exaggeration, it does seem that the vast majority of contributors to the Glasgow Church Building Society in the 1830s had joined the Free Church in 1843. Nevertheless, from February 1849, the civil courts decided that the Church of Scotland was to enjoy the full benefit of churches which its existing members had contributed little money to help build, and for which the Established Church seemed to have no practical need due to their diminished strength in the city.

To exacerbate matters for the Free Church, on 13 May 1847, the United Secession and Relief Churches had joined to form the United Presbyterian Church. The United Presbyterians were strong in many areas which the Free Church considered as its own heartlands, especially the cities, and most notably Glasgow. Although it did not see itself as a national Church in the way the Church of Scotland and the Free Church did, the United Presbyterian Church was missionary in outlook. Unless the Free Church made a renewed effort in Glasgow, the combined challenge of the United Presbyterian Church and the *quoad sacra* decision made its future in the city look decidedly bleak. Something was urgently required to retain existing Free Church membership, as well as to make a major assault on the irreligious population in the city.

In creating a separate Glasgow Evangelization Committee, the Free Church General Assembly made a practical response to Glasgow's problems. The Committee was without funding for the first eight months, and occupied itself mainly with devising some general rules for its operations. A more positive move came when the Presbytery of Glasgow created a Standing Committee on Glasgow Evangelization in 1851. In forming this Committee, the Presbytery of Glasgow, after consultation with the Assembly's Committee, decided to restrict their missionary operations to four districts of the city. The areas chosen were the east end, Wynd, Anderston and the Gorbals, which together contained a

34 *The Free Church Magazine*, (February,1848) pp.51-52.

population of 32,000. Nine Glasgow Free Church congregations volunteered to undertake missionary work in these areas.[35]

The St. John's congregation agreed to undertake missionary work in the east end and quickly established a mission station where a licentiate and a probationer conducted forenoon and afternoon services to a congregation of 150 adherents. In addition, the St. John's congregation established twenty-five sabbath schools in the area with a total of 1,100 pupils. The congregation also established a Juvenile school, Infant school, School of Industry and an Evening School of Industry, which together had an overall attendance of 492 pupils.[36]

The missionary James Hogg continued to oversee the Tron mission. He had been able to watch his congregation increase to 110 adherents at the Sunday morning service and 200 in the afternoon. The congregation's development was in fact so impressive that in October 1851, it applied to the Presbytery of Glasgow and was given permission to hold its first communion. During the first communion an angry crowd gathered outside the church and threw stones at its windows. It is difficult to understand why certain residents in the area felt threatened by the congregation's activities, although it is possible that some people, particularly Roman Catholics, opposed Hogg's aggressive Presbyterianism. Undeterred, by the next communion the number receiving the sacrament had risen to ninety-six, and the congregation now enjoyed police protection to make sure there was no repeat of the previous unsavoury incident.[37]

The congregations of St. Mathew's or West, St. Mark's and Anderston resolved to undertake mission work in the Anderston area. This led to two mission stations being established in the district with Sunday evening services held in one by a licentiate and in the other by a missionary. Congregations were thirty and 100 respectively. The Free Church was also responsible for twenty-six

35 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1852) p.306.
36 Ibid., pp.306-307.
37 Ibid., p.307. N.L. Walker, *Robert Buchanan D.D. An Ecclesiastical Biography*, pp.307-308.

sabbath schools in the district, thirteen of them in the St. Mathew's area and thirteen in the Anderston district. In addition, the St. Mathew's congregation had established two week-day schools in its district with 250 day and evening scholars. In the Anderston district a female school of industry had been established with eighty pupils attending during the day, and between thirty and forty evening scholars. The missionary efforts in the Anderston area were largely conducted by an unpaid agency of sixty-seven office-bearers, who with the help of male and female Anderston members, held eleven prayer meetings. They had also helped to establish two libraries, a reading room, a clothing society and a Society for Mutual Improvement. Finally, the Kingston, Union and Hutchesontown congregations had accepted responsibility for the Gorbals area, but it was slower in beginning its work than the other congregations and so it had yet to make any significant impact.[38]

To the Free Church, the fact that Glasgow's population had increased by 70,000 since the Disruption meant that it was imperative that the denomination kept pace by expanding its church accommodation.[39] However, although the Committee was convinced that their plans were of vital importance to their Church and society, they were also aware that there was disquiet in certain quarters. Many viewed the whole evangelising operation with suspicion, and in particular saw little point in multiplying weak mission stations. These sceptics felt that there was little possibility of the new churches ever becoming self-supporting, while wary neighbouring ministers feared that if proposed missions did prove successful, it would be achieved by attracting members from their churches. Thus, although a number of congregations agreed to undertake mission work, only Buchanan's Tron congregation specifically committed itself to establishing a territorial church. Most existing congregations appeared happy to oversee a mission station, from which new members might be 'creamed off'

38 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1852) p.307.
39 Ibid., p.309.

into their congregation, but there was little enthusiasm for creating independent rival churches.

Another agency for the evangelization of Glasgow, the Glasgow Church Building Society, was established by the Presbytery of Glasgow on 29 December 1851, with William Campbell as its President, and Buchanan, William Collins and Hugh Cogan as Vice Presidents. Already £10,000 had been promised to the Society in subscriptions (payable to the Society in annual instalments over five years), and by May 1852 a total of £2,500 had been raised.[40] One major difficulty the Society experienced was the price of potential sites for church buildings. In an industrial city like Glasgow the pressure on land from both industry and population was immense, and so the Society initially directed its attention to investigating how land could be acquired as cheaply as possible.[41]

To ensure fledgling congregations could attract experienced ministers, the Committee hoped to provide endowments of £50-a-year for the poorest churches. Therefore, it asked the General Assembly for permission to set apart £1,000 from its resources which it proposed to put into two separate funds of £500. The Committee optimistically hoped that they would soon raise an additional £2,000 which would create the first two endowments if this plan was sanctioned.[42] By March 1852 the Committee had raised over £2,498 with some 536 congregations throughout the country having contributed. The Committee also observed that the city of Glasgow had not ignored its responsibility to help itself. The Synod of Glasgow and Ayr had given £1,107 (almost half the total collection), and of this £772 had been raised within the Presbytery of Glasgow.[43] The Church held another collection the following year to enable it to increase its level of mission work. While the Committee was pleased with the amounts raised by the two collections, it also recognised that more was required from

40 Ibid., p.311.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid., p.312.
43 Ibid., pp.312-313.

congregations than simply financial contributions:

> It will not do for the people to sit indolently in their comfortable houses, or comfortable pews - the minister preaching to his full congregation, and the congregation pretty well pleased with their minister, and throwing each his guinea or shilling into the plate for a missionary to go down to the closes. The money contribution is necessary in its own place; but it is only by personal contact of Christian people and Christian ministers with the neglected population, that we can expect to make head.[44]

One of the first difficulties the Glasgow Evangelization Committee experienced was that its convener, Andrew Gray, was actually a minister in Perth, and thus some distance away from the Glasgow organisation. To ease the difficulty, Robert Candlish recommended that the Presbytery of Glasgow be given permission to call Gray from Perth for a period of three months during the year so he could meet the relevant parties, study the problems and come to a better understanding of the city's needs.[45] The Assembly of 1852 accepted this proposal, approved the plan for endowing new churches and granted another collection in the following year. The Assembly's strong support for Glasgow evangelization was largely due to a feeling within the Free Church "that Glasgow is the spot where Satan's main attack upon the gospel among us is at present made;..."[46] After 1852 the religious future of Glasgow looked much brighter, reminiscent of the hopes raised during the Glasgow ministry of Thomas Chalmers.[47] In recognition of Chalmers' previous effort to stimulate action over Glasgow's moral and social condition and his commitment to an endowed territorial ministry, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee gave the name of Chalmers' Endowments to their plan for funding the city's territorial ministry.

A public meeting was held in the city to generate enthusiasm for the

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44 Ibid., p.314.

45 Ibid., p.319.

46 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, (November,1852) p.97.

47 Ibid., pp.97-98.

Chalmers' Endowments plan on 8 May 1852. The meeting agreed that £1,500 would be the minimum capital required to create one endowment, and it proposed to raise enough money for twenty endowments.[48] In the Committee's opinion the endowment scheme was an absolute necessity if the problem of non-churchgoing was to be challenged effectively. There was by now widespread concern over Glasgow's moral condition. Having presumptuously concluded that "London never goes to Church", *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland* felt Glasgow was not far behind London in the level of its irreligion.

> It only remains that we advert to the condition of Glasgow. Glasgow, in point of population and commerce, is the second city in the empire. What is its religious condition? Of the four hundred thousand human beings who compose its population, one hundred thousand, according to the most moderate estimate, one hundred and eighty thousand, according to other calculations, or well nigh one-half the whole, never enter a church.[49]

By the Assembly of 1853 a total of eight congregations had committed themselves to establishing new territorial congregations.[50] This reflected a positive response to the changes made at the Assembly in 1852 and particularly the benefit of having Gray on site for three months a year to meet ministers, kirk-sessions, deacons courts and congregations in an effort to stimulate interest in territorialism.[51]

Buchanan's Tron congregation continued to make progress in the Wynds. As the Wynd was the most developed of the new territorial congregations, the Church Building Society had decided to build a church for the Wynd and purchased a site. The Wynd congregation was certainly not short of pastors. It was overseen by a probationer, a Mr. Wisely, by a missionary catechist, Dugald

48 Ibid., (March,1853) pp.205-207.

49 Ibid., (May,1853) p.254.

50 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1853) Appendix xix p.259.

51 Ibid.

MacColl, while it also still enjoyed the services of Hogg. By November 1852, the Wynd congregation had 112 communicants, most of whom had previously been non-churchgoers. There were three Sunday services with eighty people attending in the forenoon, 190 in the afternoon and 130 in the evening.[52]

The Glasgow Evangelization Committee's success was not limited to the Wynds. After the Assembly in 1852 it had managed to convince a number of other congregations in the city to undertake territorial work in destitute areas. Roxburgh's St. John's congregation had recruited a probationer, a Mr. Gordon, to undertake the work of missionary in their district of 2,000 people. Gordon conducted two Sunday services with an attendance of eighty in the forenoon and 150 in the afternoon, and the mission boasted a clothing society and a library.[53] Dr. Smyth's congregation at St. George's had undertaken mission work in an area of 3,082 people. The minister in charge of the mission in its first four months had been forced to retire due to ill health and was temporarily replaced by Hogg. It was largely this lack of continuity which explained why the congregation numbered only sixty adherents, although there was a healthier attendance of 250 at their recently built day school.[54]

The St. Mathew's congregation had begun a mission station in the West or St. Mathew's area with James Adam as the station's minister. The population of 1,100 among whom he evangelised was the smallest of any of the Glasgow territorial congregations, and the Glasgow Church Building Society had already obtained a church for the mission. Before long, Adam had gathered a large congregation averaging 200 at the forenoon and 400 at the afternoon services. Indeed, the congregation was so well established that it had begun contributing to the Free Church Sustentation Fund and had raised over £24 in only three months.[55] The success of this congregation reflected the fact that the St.

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52 Ibid., pp.260-263.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.

Mathew's district was by no means one of the poorest areas in the city.

The Free Anderston congregation continued to evangelise among the 4,000 strong inhabitants of the Anderston district, and made sufficient progress for the Glasgow Church Building Society to approve a plan for building a church in connection with the congregation. Kilpatrick, the missionary catechist who oversaw the mission, had already developed a congregation of sixty in the forenoon and 110 in the evening, and to add to these first signs of success he had recruited eight working-class individuals from the recently reclaimed to act as the congregation's district visitors. Kilpatrick divided the district into four parts, with each proportion assigned to two working-class visitors, who he believed would not receive the kind of prejudice that middle-class visitors often experienced when entering a working-class house. It was this agency of visitors which Kilpatrick regarded as the mainstay of the mission and it was largely through their efforts that a library, clothing society, and providential society had been established in connection with the congregation.[56] Working-class visitors could alienate those from the same social group by appearing to be above their station, but Kilpatrick clearly felt that was preferable to them being alienated by middle-class visitors.

William Arnot's congregation at St. Peter's had undertaken the work of establishing a territorial congregation in their area of 4,500 people under the guidance of a Mr. Kerr, a probationer, who established week-day and evening schools which boasted 180 pupils.[57]

In 1853, the East Gorbals church continued to support mission activity in its district of 3,450 people and made sufficient progress for the Glasgow Church Building Society to purchase a church for the congregation. The Glasgow Evangelization Committee boasted that the congregation's minister, Alexander Cumming, had resigned a desirable rural charge in order to accept the challenge

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

of Glasgow, although in truth, the Gorbals area was by no means the most testing in the district. Cumming built up his congregation on the aggressive principle. After four months in the East Gorbals area, he had visited every family in the district and was able to hold two Sunday services at the church and one in the mission station. Such commitment ensured that before long the church had 600 let seats which was the average forenoon attendance. Another eighty attended the station in the evening, and Cumming claimed that the forenoon attendance would have been greater had there been room for all those wanting to attend.[58]

The final congregation operating a territorial mission was George Philip's Union church which assumed responsibility for an area of 4,400 people. The mission was conducted by a missionary catechist, Whyte, and the congregation had established a sabbath school.[59]

Although 2,000 people was the maximum amount Thomas Chalmers envisaged being evangelised effectively by a single territorial mission, only the St. John's and St. Mathew's churches actually operated in districts with such a manageable population. While each congregation had achieved some success, the districts they operated in were extremely large, and the work relied heavily upon continued visiting by an extensive missionary agency. Consequently, each congregation had developed its own team of visitors, comprised predominantly of women and sabbath school teachers, who followed up the visits of ministers, probationers and catechists.[60] Sabbath school teachers were especially effective as visitors as they already had a degree of familiarity with a district and access to many parents through knowing their children. More interesting was the involvement of women. Visiting gave women an outlet for their energies outwith the home (if they did not work), and also enabled them to make a greater commitment to the Church in general. In fact, the St. John's, Wynds, St. George's, St. Mathew's, Anderston, St. Peter's and East Gorbals agencies were all

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid.

60 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland,* (June,1853) p.315.

comprised mostly of women, who provided valuable assistance to professional missionaries by distributing tracts and encouraging those they visited to attend meetings at the station.[61]

The Glasgow Evangelization Committee had produced some beneficial results within its first two years. All the territorial missions had managed to make some progress in their respective areas. However, it still remained to be seen whether they could make a significant impact on the long-term moral and social conditions in the mission areas. It was also becoming apparent that the social situation was not going to be significantly improved by one denomination alone, despite the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's belief that only the Free Church could save the city of Glasgow.[62]

One of the first major challenges to the Glasgow Evangelization Committee came in the form of a cholera epidemic that arrived in Scotland in 1853. Outbreaks of cholera and typhus had largely been responsible for the rising mortality rate in Glasgow throughout the nineteenth century. The cholera epidemic in 1853 and 1854 was the last serious outbreak of the disease in Scotland, and it claimed 6,000 lives, of which 4,000 were in Glasgow.[63] The epidemic placed grave dangers in the way of those working to evangelise areas of the city where the disease was most prevalent.

On 13 October 1853, the Church of Scotland's Presbytery of Edinburgh sent a letter to the Prime Minister, Palmerston, asking for a day of prayer on the subject of cholera. Palmerston agreed, but also advised people to spend the next six months preparing physical defences against the disease.[64] Robert Buchanan was infuriated by Palmerston's advice, believing the Prime Minister had elevated the importance of material over spiritual measures.[65] At a lecture delivered on

61 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1853) p.261.
62 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, (June,1853) p.315.
63 R.A. Cage, 'Health in Glasgow ', in R.A. Cage (ed.), *The Working Class in Glasgow 1750-1914* (London,1987), pp.56-57.
64 R. Buchanan, *The Waste Places of our Great Cities* (Glasgow,1853).
65 Ibid., p.19.

30 November 1853 in the Glasgow City Hall before an audience of 2,500, Buchanan gave his views on the disease which had claimed many Glasgow lives. While he did not deny the disease may have been spread by noxious gases, Buchanan maintained that God's hand was ultimately behind the disease.[66] For Buchanan, the cholera was God's retribution upon Glasgow for having neglected the physical and spiritual condition of certain areas in the city.

> The cholera, by fastening first and chiefly on the places where filth and physical wretchedness abound, is virtually pointing at these waste places of our neglected villages and overcrowded cities as with the finger of God, and saying to us - "Look here!"[67]

Although Buchanan saw the cholera epidemic as a visitation from God, he was not blind to the need for far-reaching sanitary reforms in the city. He acknowledged that the level of sanitary reform required was too great to be conducted by voluntary associations, and would have to be undertaken by the municipal authority. As there would be considerable local hostility to expensive sanitary reforms that would lead to increased local taxation, Buchanan argued that the best way to proceed would be for Parliament to compel local authorities to undertake such measures.[68] Buchanan's recommendations were radical. In both advocating territorial home mission by the Churches and urging Parliament to compel local authorities to undertake sanitary reform, Buchanan was an example of the Evangelical hybrid who combined strict Calvinism with a call for far-reaching social reform. This combination was particularly prevalent in the Free Church. Other examples included James Begg and Thomas Guthrie, who both recognised that social reforms could help to make people amenable to the Word of God.[69]

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66 Ibid.

67 Ibid., p.27.

68 Ibid., pp.38-39.

69 See J. Begg, *Pauperism and the Poor Laws* (Edinburgh,1849); and T. Guthrie, *A Plea for Ragged Schools* (Edinburgh,1849).

This speech at the City Hall also represented Buchanan's continued effort to overcome what he saw as hostility, or rather lethargy, towards his territorial plan in the city. It was largely because of this perceived hostility that Buchanan published *A Second Appeal on the Spiritual Destitution of the Masses in Glasgow.*[70] The opposition which he believed existed to territorialism must have been perplexing for Buchanan, after his Tron congregation's work in the Wynds had enjoyed such success. On 18 May 1854, Robert Candlish opened the new Wynd church.[71] The success of the Wynd mission was largely testimony to MacColl's efforts as missionary. During his holidays from divinity college, MacColl visited between thirty and forty families a day in a relentless attempt to encourage their attendance at the station.[72] The Glasgow Evangelization Committee was delighted with the success of the Wynd mission and in 1854, it recommended that the station be raised to the status of a sanctioned charge. The General Assembly agreed to sanction the Wynd mission and MacColl was ordained as the congregation's first minister. The Wynd church became the centre for the revival of 1859 in Glasgow and was the inspiration for a church-extension programme which saw repeated disjunctions from the congregation to establish territorial churches elsewhere in the city.[73]

In 1854, having discovered that a group of religious sceptics under the title of Secularists were holding open-air meetings in the city, members of the Assembly's Committee, in conjunction with other interested religious parties in Glasgow, decided to form The Christian Institute. In response to the Secularist meetings, the Institute began its own programme of public lectures and tract

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70 N.L. Walker, *Robert Buchanan D.D. An Ecclesiastical Biography,* p.326.

71 *Proceedings and Debates of the General of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1854) p.135.

72 D. MacColl, *The Work in the Wynds* or *Among the Masses* (London,1867), p.34.

73 Just as members of the Wynd church had left to form a territorial congregation in Bridgegate, this process was repeated in other areas once congregations had become fully developed. In fact, in 1886, it was calculated that eighteen churches and two or three mission stations owed their origins to what started as the Wynd mission. This was a major achievement for the territorial movement and showed how beneficial it could be if new mission stations had a 'parent' congregation to oversee their development. *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1886) p.71.

distribution.[74] The Committee soon extended its operations to include the visitation of factories to hold lectures, and their favourable reception led in many work places to the establishment of societies among the workers for their moral, social and intellectual improvement.[75]

However, it became increasingly apparent to the Committee that the territorial missionary efforts for which it was responsible required skills that were very different from those involved in running a church on the attractive principle. Although missionaries and their agents found themselves operating in new and at times dangerous circumstances, no systematic attempt had been made to train them.[76] To remedy this, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee suggested establishing some form of training centre for mission workers, an idea which it claimed was being pursued by Evangelical Churches in England. The convener of the Glasgow Evangelization Committee, Andrew Gray, made his interest in the subject clear at a public meeting in January 1854. After this meeting a member of the Church of England sent £500 to the Committee's convener to help establish a Home Missionary College to train evangelists.[77] The Glasgow Evangelization Committee hoped that these Evangelists would be recruited from the working class, as opposed to the middle-class recruits who, until recently, had monopolised the work. As far as the Committee was concerned, this was not so much a radical new departure, as the implementation of methods which had already proved successful in the foreign-mission field. When British Churches operated overseas they employed individuals who could speak the native language and understood the customs of those they were attempting to evangelise. The Committee was convinced that recruiting evangelists from the working class at home would lead to similar success in

74 Ibid., (1854) Appendix xviii p.142.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid., pp.143-144.
77 Ibid., p.144.

converting the domestic "heathen" to Christianity.[78]

Those sceptical of recruiting working-class home missionaries pointed to the unsuccessful effort by the City Mission agency to implement these principles. In the Committee's opinion, however, the City Mission had failed because it did not organise individuals properly in mission work or reward success. The Committee also disliked the City Mission's method of operating which was to seek to add members to existing churches, rather than to create new working-class churches. To the Committee, the fact that no effort had been made to win Christian working men to God's work was a great waste of the undoubted leadership qualities existing within the working class. Gray predicted that many working men would gladly offer their services to the Free Church if they were given the opportunity to be pastor of their own congregation.[79]

Gray's proposal to have a proper system for training evangelists appeared to make practical sense, but it came to nothing. If anything it was the ministers who viewed the prospect of training and licensing lay evangelists with suspicion. Ministers in the nineteenth century, who had served their own apprenticeships for several years at divinity colleges, looked suspiciously upon any plan which they felt would diminish their privileged social status. In rejecting this proposal they protected the role of minister against any form of dilution with a tenacity that was typical of other skilled workers in the nineteenth century. However, they also closed the door on one possibility of increased working-class involvement in the Church. As we will see, the question of lay evangelists continued to be a contentious issue for the Free Church's home mission.

By 1855, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee was responsible for eleven territorial operations.[80] One of the two new stations the Committee had established was at Finnieston in the west of the city. The district was predominantly working class and churchgoing in character, but the Committee

78 Ibid., pp.144-145.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid., (1855) Appendix xiv p.107.

feared that the area's inhabitants were on the verge of a descent into irreligion. For this reason it provided money to establish day schools in the area and appointed a minister to oversee the district.[81] The case of Finnieston represented a new, growing problem for the Glasgow Evangelization Committee. Previously, their evangelising activity in Glasgow had been directed almost exclusively at the Old Town in the city centre, where the worst social consequences of industrialisation were evident. However, as industry settled on the city's outskirts, it brought along its workforce. The result was the emergence of new housing areas on the peripheries that were greatly under-churched. This created concern among those involved in missionary work, who feared that unless something was done for the city's extremities then the ungodliness, vice and degradation which was typical of the city centre would simply replicate itself elsewhere. By throwing itself into the work of evangelising peripheral areas around Glasgow, however, there was a danger that the Committee would spread its resources too thin and that the very poorest in the city centre would be neglected.

It was largely because of the number of obstacles which stood in the way of successfully evangelising Glasgow that an appeal was made by William Nixon, minister at the St. John's church in Montrose, to the Assembly in 1855, urging them to use their political strength as a Church to elect favourable Town Councils who would introduce legislation for the regulation of drink, pawn shops and dance halls.[82] This was a significant development and it has been calculated that temperance did indeed from 1857 become the key issue pressed by Glasgow Evangelicals on the Glasgow Town Council.[83] It was the repeated difficulties they experienced in the mission field that encouraged Free Church ministers and their congregations to flex their political muscle at local elections.

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81 Ibid., p.109.

82 Ibid., pp.291-292.

83 I. Maver, 'Politics and Power in the Scottish City: Glasgow Town Council in the Nineteenth Century', in T.M. Devine (ed.), *Scottish Elites* (Edinburgh,1994), p.113.

Such intervention was a recognition that a secure, healthy and stable population would be far easier to evangelise than one sunk in misery and social degradation.

One of the biggest difficulties the Glasgow Evangelization Committee experienced in extending its missionary operations was its shortage of funds. The Committee's financial predicament was so acute that after its liabilities for the year 1854-1855 had been met, it was left with only £700 for the following year, which was hardly enough to pay existing salaries let alone initiate new stations. In March 1856, the Committee was given permission by the Assembly to draw money from the Home Mission Committee's collection.[84] From the outset, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee had been dependent on private liberality. After only four years of operation it appeared that Glasgow's commercial middle class was reducing its level of support, and this led to restrictions on how much territorial work the Committee could undertake. Similarly, other areas in the country, which had initially been willing to support the Glasgow Evangelization Committee, grew more interested in alleviating their own religious destitution. The confidence in Chalmers' idea of the territorial ministry remained strong, but wealthy Free Church members were clearly becoming reluctant to finance such programmes. It is possible that the creation of a national Church no longer generated the enthusiasm within the middle class that it did between 1843 and 1850, just as the increasing drift of the middle classes to the west end led to a portion of the middle class abandoning the needs of the working class. It is also conceivable that the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's growing dependence on working-class voluntary workers led to a feeling of disgruntlement among some middle-class Christians who felt that they were only valued for their money.

Although great faith had been placed in the Church Building Society as an agency vital to the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's success, it was evident by the spring of 1856 that it had achieved only limited success. In its five-year

84 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1855) p.292.

existence the Society had only built two new churches from its own funds. It had also purchased two other churches, and was in the process of buying a third, while it had also acquired a site for a church.[85] One of the Church Building Society's biggest problems was its failure to keep pace with the Glasgow Evangelization Committee which had a number of mission stations under its auspices in need of church buildings.[86] Considering that so much stress was placed on church buildings, the Church Building Society's repeated failure to meet the demand did not bode well for the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's operations in the city.

The Glasgow Evangelization Committee had slowly extended its territorial operations in Glasgow, but a major problem for the Free Church was revealed at a meeting of the Presbytery of Glasgow in the spring of 1856. During this meeting, Dr. Millar drew the presbytery's attention to the fact that the most westward Free Church in the city had been built in 1845. However, between 1845 and 1856, between 45,000 and 50,000 mainly middle-class people had settled to the west of that church. These figures were a matter of great consternation to the Glasgow Evangelization Committee, because they were precisely the people whom the Free Church relied on in Glasgow to contribute the necessary funding for evangelising the poorest areas of the city. If this class were to fall away from churchgoing, it would lead to serious repercussions for the Free Church, and therefore interested parties decided to build a new church in that expanding quarter of the city.[87] It remained to be seen, however, just how much good a single church could achieve amongst such a mass of people.

Given the financial problems that plagued the Glasgow Evangelization Committee, it is possible that the damage had already been done. Nineteenth-century ministers tended to regard non-churchgoing as a problem exclusive to the working class, but middle-class church members were just as likely to fall

85 Ibid., (1856) Appendix xxi p.105.

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid., pp.109-110.

away from attending church, or change their allegiance to another denomination, if they moved to an area where there was no Free Church congregation. It was surely no coincidence that the decline in funds available for evangelising Glasgow became acute at precisely the time that the usual benefactors for such operations were leaving the poverty-stricken city centre for spacious suburban villas. In doing so, they increasingly adopted an out-of-sight out-of-mind attitude to those left behind. Even those figures who were still willing to contribute towards church building, such as Hugh Tennant, preferred to give their money for churches in areas where the level of religious and social destitution was not even vaguely comparable to the city centre.[88]

To the Glasgow Evangelization Committee, the size of the non-churchgoing problem was immense. In 1855, the Committee calculated that over 100,000 of the city's 300,000 nominal Protestants (who were considered old enough) did not actually go to church. These figures were based on the findings of James Hogg, the Committee's General Catechist, who had visited extensively in the city, although he did not visit many of the poorest areas where it was presumed that the level of non-churchgoing would have been even higher. The districts he did visit contained a population of 110,000 of whom 86,000 were Protestants. However, Hogg discovered from his questioning that 60,000 people attended no church at all.[89] The Glasgow Evangelization Committee used these statistics to reinforce their case for extending missionary operations in the city. They also expressed their genuine feeling of disappointment that the Free Church had been overtaken in the level of its evangelistic efforts by other denominations. Having once been at the forefront of missionary operations in the city, the Committee felt this was a matter of regret and shame. The Committee further argued that the Free Church in Glasgow needed to recruit the

88 The industrialist Hugh Tennant, for example, had provided money for building a church in the suburban and largely middle class Wellpark district.

89 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1856) Appendix xxi p.111.

equivalent of fifty average sized congregations from non-churchgoers if it were to be responsible for its proportionate share of the city's evangelistic work.[90]

> Other Christian denominations are fully alive to the truth, and alive to which it imposes upon them. They are generously and magnanimously putting forth efforts in Glasgow, which not only rival but outstrip those of the Free Church.[91]

More than anything else it was the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's continual financial problems that were responsible for the restrictions on what could be achieved in the mission field. At the end of the financial year on 31 March 1856, the Committee was left with a balance of only £374 and by the time the Assembly met in 1856 even that sum had been spent.[92] The situation was so pressing that Robert Candlish felt the Committee should either be given another collection or else discharged. Candlish personally favoured the former option because he believed they could not afford to under-estimate Glasgow's importance to the country as a whole, and therefore felt that the city continued to have a special claim on the entire Church.[93] Eventually, the Assembly granted another collection, but it would not take place until March 1857 and so it was difficult to see what could be achieved in the home-mission field in the interim period. It was evident that the Glasgow Evangelization Committee was particularly impressed and not a little envious of the United Presbyterian Church's success in Glasgow. The United Presbyterian Church had managed to build a number of churches and attracted many of their best ministers to the city. For this reason, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's convener, John Roxburgh, argued that for the Free Church "To evangelise Glasgow is a work not only of duty, but of self-interest, yea, of self-preservation."[94] Whether

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90 Ibid., p.113.

91 Ibid., p.112.

92 Ibid

93 Ibid., pp.146-147.

94 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland,* (March,1857) p.181.

Roxburgh's reference to self-preservation concerned the Free Church's very existence or the established social order is unclear, but it is likely that those involved in Free Church missionary enterprises in Glasgow in the 1850s were motivated by both factors.

The collection in March 1857, however, raised only £1,127. After the missionaries' salaries were paid up to 31 March, the Committee was left with only £626 for the forthcoming year while its projected expenditure required double that amount. The Committee's financial predicament was so acute that it could only guarantee its agents' salaries for six months rather than for a full year.[95] Although the means to achieve it appeared non-existent, it was ironic that the Committee used the statistics of the frequently pilloried Glasgow City Mission to reinforce its argument for greater evangelistic effort in Glasgow. The City Mission, having visited fifty-four of its mission districts in Glasgow, calculated that there was 25,546 families who rarely if ever attended church, and a further 15,765 families who were definitely not churchgoers.[96] As with Hogg's, these statistics appeared so formidable that those interested in evangelising the city increasingly found themselves looking for ways to make it easier to achieve. John Roxburgh, the convener of the Glasgow Evangelization Committee, told the General Assembly in 1857:

> I say, with all my heart, provide better and more comfortable dwellings for the poor and operative classes. I say provide them with the means of recreation and rational amusement. I say, shorten their hours of labour, and do what you can to secure for them the blessings of the Saturday half-holiday.[97]

However, Roxburgh was at pains to stress that these measures would fail if they were meant to replace rather than be an aid to the Word of God, which he believed should still be taken to the outcast population through the territorial

95 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1857) pp.154-155.

96 Ibid., p.156.

97 Ibid., p.157.

system.[98] The Glasgow Evangelization Committee seemed to be adopting a more radical stance on such matters, but it also appeared that the Committee was living on borrowed time, as opinion within the Free Church increasingly moved towards reducing the privileged position which Glasgow enjoyed over other cities. The Presbytery of Dundee was the main body looking to achieve this, and it submitted an overture to the Free Church General Assembly in 1857 asking for the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's collection to be extended to include other towns which also had spiritual destitution.[99] Even Robert Candlish, who had consistently supported and defended the Glasgow Evangelization Committee, was happy to see its collection extended to include other towns such as Paisley and Dundee, but only because he believed Glasgow could ultimately benefit from widening the collection.[100] At no stage in the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's short report did it recommend extending the collection, but the fact that nobody rose to speak in defence of an independent collection for the city, indicated that there was a general agreement within Glasgow that the city could possibly benefit from a collection which would have a wider appeal to the country at large. Having lost its exclusive collection, however, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee was also in danger of losing much of its autonomy. Once again it would have to argue Glasgow's case in the face of competition from other towns and cities with spiritual destitution.

Despite the problems the Glasgow Evangelization Committee was experiencing, the Wynd operation continued to go from strength to strength. Between 1856-1858, the Wynd church under the ministry of Dugald MacColl finally developed the standard congregational agencies of elders, deacons and collectors for the Sustentation, Education and Foreign Mission funds. These individuals were all residents in the area and members of the church, and so replaced the recruits from the Tron church who had previously undertaken the

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid., pp.158-159.

100 Ibid., p.161.

work. Consequently, the Wynd church had finally become a self-supporting congregation, run by and for the working class. In the year before the church was built, between 1853 and 1854, only 2s a week had been raised at the mission door, while over £250 had been raised in the 1857-1858 financial year.[101]

In addition, the congregation had developed a sixty-member agency under eight superintendents to undertake the work of selling Bibles, house-to-house visiting and distributing tracts and over a three-year period they managed to sell 1,100 Bibles in the district.[102] This agency also began a Sunday evening service which was limited to those wearing working clothes after it had been brought to MacColl's attention that people were put off from entering the church because the congregation was so well dressed.[103] Thirty visitors from the congregation visited the district in their own working clothes rather than their Sunday best to invite people to the service. Male visitors, moreover, formed a Night Brigade who visited the district with Bull-lamps after dark to make sure that those who had previously agreed to attend the evening church service actually fulfilled their promise.[104] The success of the Sunday evening service was particularly notable given that it was achieved without a missionary and at a cost of only £20 a year. Furthermore, £10 of this sum was raised by members of the Sunday evening service themselves which meant that this worthwhile new development cost the Wynd church only £10 a year.[105]

Since it began, the Wynd congregation had made an average annual net increase of 100 let seats, and by the Assembly in 1858, all 580 seats in the church were let.[106] At the same time, the church's success had not been achieved by sacrificing its territorial nature. In fact, five-sixths of the seats were held by those

101 Ibid., (1858) Appendix pp.11-13.
102 Ibid., p.10.
103 D. MacColl, *Among the Masses*, p.136.
104 Ibid., p.9.
105 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1858) Appendix p.10.
106 Ibid., p.11.

who lived or had lived in the Wynds. Between the opening of the church in 1854 and the Assembly in 1858, a total of 331 new members had been admitted to the Wynd church, and not more than twenty of these members had been received with certificates from other churches in Glasgow.[107]

However, the Wynd congregation was not satisfied simply with having reached the status of an independent, sanctioned church. Soon, MacColl and his congregation were looking to establish a territorial church in another district of the city. The area chosen was the Bridgegate, the principal Catholic district in Glasgow, and an area notorious for rioting. Regardless of these obstacles, by May 1858, the Wynd congregation had secured a site for the proposed church at a cost of £1,800.[108] This money was given by James Burns, who had long taken an interest in the Wynd congregation. As with Edinburgh's West Port operation in its hey day under Chalmers' direction, the Wynd church had created such a stir of publicity that it experienced none of the financial problems which were all too common to other churches. With the site paid for, MacColl received a further £1,122 for the church building from other interested parties in the space of only ten days. The Wynd congregation also committed itself to raising £300 by the end of 1858.[109] Having been the product of the Tron's missionary endeavour, the Wynd church was about to add the second church in a programme of church extension which ensured that Glasgow remained a centre of territorialism long after the Glasgow Evangelization Committee had been dissolved. The Wynd mission had proved a success, but what of the other mission stations in Glasgow?

From the thirteen stations which had received financial aid from the Glasgow Evangelization Committee, the Wynds, East Gorbals, West, St. John's and Finnieston had all developed by 1858 into sanctioned charges with their own churches. The Union mission was on the verge of leaving its humble station to

107 Ibid., p.64., and Appendix p.11.
108 Ibid., p.65.
109 Ibid.

occupy an almost completed church. There were a number of other stations that were also ready to move out of mission halls into churches of their own, although the Church Building Society's lack of funds meant this had not yet been possible.[110] Nevertheless, of the £10,000 that was promised when the Church Building Society was founded in December 1851, the credible sum of £9,900 had indeed been subscribed by May 1858. This money had been spent by the Society acquiring sites and building churches for the Wynds, St. John's and Union congregations. The Society had also given grants totalling £2,400 to help build churches in connection with the Gorbals, West and Finnieston congregations, and had also built a mission hall for the St. James station in the Calton district.[111] However, the Society may have benefited from having set their sights a little higher than £10,000, particularly as the price of land and building costs in Glasgow continued to increase.

Having built six churches and a mission hall, the Church Building Society had been able to help just over half those congregations which were connected to the Glasgow Evangelization Committee. The same could not be said for the Chalmers' Endowments scheme. Between the conception of the scheme in 1851 and the Assembly in 1858, a total of £4,300 had been subscribed, with a further £1,000 given to the scheme by the Glasgow Evangelization Committee. This had provided only three and a half endowments of slightly more than £60 a year. The Wynd and Young Street churches were the first beneficiaries of the endowment scheme and in March 1858, the Commission of the General Assembly gave the Union territorial church the third endowment to allow a minister to be settled to the charge.[112] When the scheme began the Glasgow Evangelization Committee had looked to create twenty endowments, and so the fact that it had only established three was a major disappointment. Its failure merely served to justify the concerns of those who disliked the idea of establishing weak mission stations

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid.

112 Ibid., pp.3-4.

throughout the city.

Between the Assemblies in 1851 and 1858, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee spent a total of £6,747 on all facets of its missionary operations. This included grants of £560 to ensure that each station could employ a teacher to run a day school to help meet the educational needs of their district's children.[113] The Committee also provided funds to enable the Glasgow Free Church Christian Institute to continue its efforts against secularists operating in the city. Members of the Institute visited factories and other workplaces, assisted in the formation of Societies for mutual improvement, and encouraged working-class people to attend church.[114] Similarly, the Committee paid for 10,000 copies of *The Christian Treasury* and a further 20,000 tracts on Popery, to be circulated in those areas where it was responsible for territorial operations.[115]

Given the pitiful sum of money raised by the collection in March 1857, it was clear that the Committee's financial predicament could not be allowed to continue for much longer before it damaged the Committee's existing territorial operations. Although the Assembly in 1857 gave the Committee permission to take £600 from the Home Mission Committee's collection in December 1857, this sum had not even been enough to cover the Committee's expenses. At a meeting of the Committee on 2 November 1857, it was resolved to withdraw all educational grants to stations.[116] As has been shown, schools were integral to the level of influence which stations could assert in an area, and it would reduce the hold which stations had over a local population if school facilities were withdrawn. At this meeting the Committee also decided to give up two of the stations which were least likely to develop into sanctioned charges. After some further cuts in its expenditure, the Committee was able to save £316,10s.[117]

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113 Ibid., p.4.
114 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
116 Ibid., p.5.
117 Ibid.

These restrictions meant the Committee was responsible for only nine territorial operations. It was clear that something had to be done to prevent the Free Church in Glasgow being forced to relinquish much of its mission work.

Having been asked by the Assembly in 1857 to consider how the Committee's funds could be used to support territorial operations throughout the country, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee appointed a Sub-Committee in November 1857 to examine all the available possibilities. After considering the matter, the Sub-Committee recommended that the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee should take over the Glasgow Committee's liabilities which then amounted to £725 a year. The Sub-Committee also suggested that in future all towns with a population in excess of 20,000 which experienced destitution should be placed on the same footing as Glasgow when applying for grants from the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee. This would unquestionably require more money, but the Sub-Committee also suggested that the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee should be granted an annual collection to replace the biennial collection it shared with the Highland Committee.[118] These suggestions would mean the end to an independent Committee for Glasgow, but the Glasgow Evangelization Committee accepted the Sub-Committee's proposals and recommended them to the Assembly in 1858.[119]

Although the Home Mission Committee was at pains to stress that the idea of amalgamating the two Committees originated with the Glasgow Evangelization Committee, it was evident that the latter had been greatly influenced by the Presbytery of Dundee's overture to the Assembly in 1857. After considering the overture the Glasgow Evangelization Committee told the Home Mission Committee that they had "come to the conclusion that the time has now arrived when, with a view to consolidate the Schemes of the Church, and to

118 Ibid., p.7.
119 Ibid., pp.7-8.

remove any notion, should it exist, of one city or locality being favoured above others, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee should be amalgamated with the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee."[120] Without doubt, Glasgow had enjoyed a privileged position financially. Since 1851, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee had received £6,746 through collections and donations to encourage missionary operations, and Roxburgh estimated that this outlay had stimulated local congregations to raise and spend £10,000 themselves. Moreover, the Glasgow Church Building Society had spent £9,900 and a further £4,300 had been raised for the Chalmers' Endowment scheme.[121] These were figures which no other town or city in Scotland had enjoyed, and although the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's financial predicament had placed constraints on how much it could achieve, it was only natural that other areas would cast envious glances at what appeared to be Glasgow's favoured position.

Nevertheless, the money the Free Church spent in evangelising Glasgow had brought returns. To James Hogg, the Committee's General Catechist, the condition of the city's territorial operations had never looked healthier.[122] In light of the Committee's recent decision to withdraw from two stations Hogg's perception may appear a little over-optimistic. Without additional funds, it seemed unlikely there would be much further progress. While the Presbytery of Dundee's overture persuaded the Glasgow Evangelization Committee that there was nothing to be gained from isolating other areas of the country, the Committee's decision to recommend amalgamation with the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee was also motivated by self interest. The Committee had enjoyed considerable success but it was clear that the money to maintain it was no longer available. By the Assembly in 1858, the Committee was left with only £188 in reserve. If the Free Church's territorial operations in the city were not to regress, those responsible for them would have to find

120 Ibid., p.7.
121 Ibid., p.62.
122 Ibid.

further financial aid from other sources.

Conclusion

More than anything else the Glasgow Evangelization Committee had proved that the territorial ideal could be successful, even amidst enormous poverty and social degradation. Most of the congregations which it had helped to establish had developed into thriving and in many cases sanctioned charges with their own church buildings without having disastrous consequences for existing churches. This enabled the Free Church in Glasgow to overcome the crisis of the *quoad sacra* decision. Without doubt, the Committee's lack of resources had been the main reason why the Free Church had not been able to extend its territorial operations on the scale which it would have liked. The regular publication of church attendance statistics by Buchanan, Hogg and the Glasgow City Mission also served to confirm the fears among those involved in missionary work that the Committee's endeavours were not keeping pace with Glasgow's rapidly growing population. The accuracy of these statistics was sometimes questionable, but they gave the impression that the level of non-churchgoing was unacceptably high in the city that was the heart of the Scottish economy.

Rather than address the various reasons why people did not attend church, the Free Church too readily accepted the argument that non-churchgoing was due to the lack of available church accommodation, especially in the poorest quarters of the city. Therefore, the desire to saturate the city with territorial missions became even greater. The Free Church threw itself into evangelising the poorest areas of the city wholeheartedly, but before long it became clear that the developing residential areas in the west of the city did not contain a single Free Church congregation. This reality was in stark contrast to the popular belief that the Free Church spent so much of its time caring for the souls and watching the cheque-books of its middle-class members, that it ignored and thereby

isolated the poorest elements of society. Instead, it appears that the Free Church, by ignoring the increasing residential segregation which was taking place in Glasgow, managed to isolate the very middle-class members who were in a position to pay for the territorial programme in the Old Town. Nevertheless, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee should be applauded for realising that middle-class attempts to evangelise the working class all too often amounted to telling them how to live and were ultimately self-defeating. Consequently, the Committee was quick to encourage working-class participation at all levels in territorial missions so that the goal of an independent congregation, run by and for the working class, could be achieved sooner than if it were led by the middle class.

Those who were responsible for the Free Church's territorial campaign in Glasgow never once questioned that the plan could bring about Glasgow's moral and social regeneration. If the scheme was not bringing about the massive social transformation the Committee had hoped, and it certainly was not, it was simply assumed that territorialism had not been implemented over a wide enough field. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that the Committee spent so much of its time complaining about its lack of resources. Even ministers such as Roxburgh, who were willing to concede that there was an environmental factor behind non-churchgoing, in his case poor housing, were always at pains to stress that such problems were óf less importance than an individual's moral failings which could only be rectified by the Gospel, taken to them through the territorial system. This could never be achieved without greater funding, and therefore the Glasgow Evangelization Committee was happy to recommend amalgamation with the Home Mission Committee, even though this meant sacrificing its own autonomy which had enabled the Committee to respond to local problems in more creative ways than other areas of the country. The amalgamation of the two Committees was also encouraged by the growing competition for funds from

other towns and cities in Scotland. While the Glasgow Evangelization Committee had financial problems, to other destitute areas of the country such as Dundee and Paisley, the Committee's financial position was enviable. Towns like Dundee were in many ways microcosms of Glasgow, and it was only natural that they wanted to develop their own territorial programmes. This would seem to indicate that the territorial movement had ground to a standstill elsewhere in the country, while Glasgow appeared to receive around the clock care. The next chapter will discuss whether this was really the case, or if Dundee's grievance was merely an isolated case.

CHAPTER THREE

A TRIED AND TRUSTED PLAN, 1851-1858

The Census of Religious Worship and Education in 1851 proved to be a controversial measure in Scotland where denominational rivalry had long been such a feature in ecclesiastical life. Given the events of 1843 it was perhaps not surprising that a greater number of churches refused to take part in the census in Scotland than England. Many of those churches which had suffered the greatest loss of membership as a result of the Disruption decided not to reveal their embarrassment publicly. Somewhat predictably, the Free Church, which had so much to prove both to the Established Church and the State, had the lowest number of refusals, only 7% of its churches, which was slightly less than the United Presbyterian Church's 8%, and considerably less than the 23.6% of churches which sent no returns from the Church of Scotland.[1]

On the whole, the returns were too often incomplete, making it difficult for Horace Mann, the Assistant to the Register General, to present the returns as being an accurate guide to either Scottish church accommodation or church attendance. Nevertheless, despite officially having fewer churches than the Established Church - 1,183 to 889 - the Free Church was reported to have had the highest level of attendance on census Sunday. A total of 555,702 people attended the Free Church's forenoon, afternoon and evening services, which was slightly more than the 555,409 who were reported to have attended the Established Church's three services (the census gives no indication of how many attended two or more services).[2] Perhaps more importantly, the census revealed that the Established Church could no longer claim to represent a majority of Scottish

1 D.J. Withrington, 'The 1851 Census of Religious Worship and Education, with a Note on Church Accommodation in Nineteenth Century Scotland', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xviii (1973), p.134. Supplements 1 and 2 to Tables A and B in *Census of Great Britain, 1851. Religious Worship and Education: Scotland. Report and Tables* (London,1854), pp.4-5.

2 Ibid., both Withrington article p.140., and census.

Presbyterians. This was a significant point both for the Free Church which saw itself as the true Established Church and for Presbyterian Dissenting Churches which favoured a policy of disestablishment.

The census provided the Free Church with an opportunity to highlight the Established Church's weakened position, but the census also disturbed and alarmed many Free Church ministers. Although a third of the population in Scotland were found to have attended church in the afternoon and a fifth in the evening, the figures were looked upon as completely unsatisfactory. Nineteenth-century Evangelical ministers like Thomas Chalmers and Robert Buchanan had maintained that between 58% and 65% of the population should attend church. Thus, the 1851 findings, when they were finally published in 1854, were never likely to be considered adequate. Nor was it any compensation that Scotland appeared to have a higher level of church attendance than England. As one commentator in 1859 wrote of the religious census in 1851. "The inevitable tendency of all this is manifest enough. Christian Britain is becoming progressively unchristianised at the main centres of her activity and of her life."[3]

Modern statistical techniques have shown how the census revealed that levels of church attendance in Scotland were as high and often higher in large towns than in rural areas.[4] In the mid-nineteenth century, however, the long-established belief that church attendance was more vigilantly observed in rural areas than in towns grew in strength after the census had been published. "The Christian Church becomes a smaller and smaller moiety, and a less and less influential element, in the heart of the swarming city masses. The secular threatens to swallow up the spiritual, the world to swamp the Church, in the very seat and citadel of the nation's strength."[5] Rather than demonstrate the

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3 'Scottish Home Missions', *North British Review*, xxx (February,1859), p.211.

4 C.G. Brown, 'Religion, Class and Church and Class Growth' , in W.H. Fraser and R.J. Morris (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland vol ii 1830-1914* (Edinburgh,1990). See also C.G Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (London,1987); C.G. Brown, 'Did Urbanisation Secularise Britain', *Urban History Yearbook*, (1988), pp.1-14.

5 'Scottish Home Missions', *North British Review*, p.211.

level of irreligion in towns, the census of 1851 revealed the large inverse relationship which existed in Scotland between churchgoing and the rate of a town's population growth in the period 1800-1850. To Callus Brown, this proved that churchgoing did not decline as a town's population increased, but declined only when the rate of church building could not keep pace with the rise in a town's population.[6] Nevertheless, although it is now clear that the Religious Census had revealed that urban inhabitants were no less likely to attend church than their rural counterparts, people in the nineteenth century did not have access to such sophisticated statistical methods. As a result, concern over the spiritual welfare of those who lived in large towns and cities grew after the census had been published and its findings digested. According to the widespread popular perception, rural dwellers were regular and faithful churchgoers whose commitment only wavered when they moved to a town in search of employment. In the towns they became spiritually lost, neglected church attendance, and succumbed to a number of distinctively urban temptations. It was this attitude which ensured that the Religious Census in 1851 led to renewed calls for the Churches to do more for those who relocated to cities from rural areas.[7] As the parish system operated effectively in rural areas, it appeared to make sense to replicate the territorial system in towns as a means of reaching the incomers from the countryside.

Chief among the special temptations in the towns was thought to be the demon drink, which if hardly unknown in rural areas, was far more widely available in towns. In 1851, such was the concern over intemperance that the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness persuaded three of the most prominent and vocal Free Church ministers on social matters, James Begg, Thomas Guthrie and William Blaikie, each to write a pamphlet on the question of intemperance. For Begg, the minister at the Newington church in Edinburgh,

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6 C.G. Brown, 'Religion, Class and Church Growth', p.315.

7 'Scottish Home Missions', *North British Review*, p.206.

drunkenness was the greatest single cause of pauperism in Scotland. Begg calculated that there was an average annual expenditure on the Poor Laws in Edinburgh between 1846 and 1850 of £26,679, of which he estimated that £21,344 was directly linked to drunkenness.[8] This was a dubious conclusion given that much of the period was blighted by economic depression. Begg also argued that temperance reformers would have to extend their operations more effectively and over a wider field, or otherwise the efforts of moral reformers through mission work would be entirely wasted.[9]

Thomas Guthrie, the minister at the Free St. John's church in Edinburgh, argued that drunkenness was the cause of half the crimes in Scotland. He was particularly distressed at how intemperance had impeded the missionary work of his congregation at St. John's in the Old Town of Edinburgh.[10] Therefore, Guthrie felt that something must be done for those who were "left to such ignorance, and reduced to such a state of physical misery and moral helplessness, that they cannot resist the presence of temptation."[11] As a total abstainer, prohibitionist and founder member of the Free Church's Temperance Society, Guthrie later advocated some Draconian measures for tackling urban drunkenness. He argued in 1857 that juries should have the power to punish anyone they found to be a drunkard in the same way they dealt with someone found to be a lunatic. This would include committing individual drunkards to an asylum, shaving their heads and placing them in strait jackets.[12] Fortunately, the radical and heavy-handed approach favoured by Guthrie was in stark contrast to the relatively moderate measure which had become law when the Forbes Mackenzie Act was passed in 1853.

William Blaikie, the minister at the Pilrig church in Edinburgh, had more

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8 J. Begg, *Social Reform--Drunkenness and Pauperism* (Edinburgh,1851), pp.2-8.

9 Ibid., p.16.

10 T. Guthrie, *A Plea on Behalf of Drunkards and Against Drunkenness* (Edinburgh,1851), p.11 and p.21.

11 Ibid., pp.54-55.

12 T. Guthrie, *The City Its Sins and Sorrows* (Edinburgh,1857), p.140.

enlightened and progressive views on such matters. In a pamphlet, *The Dwellings of the People*, which he published in 1851, Blaikie was more concerned with analysing the elusive environmental factor behind drunkenness than either Begg or Guthrie. For Blaikie, drunkenness was the greatest single factor in destroying the family unit, "the nursery both of the Church and of the State;..."[13] Rather than individual weaknesses, Blaikie felt it was the inadequate housing of the working class which resulted in so many of the urban poor succumbing to the temptation of alcohol. Thus, Blaikie wanted to see the Model Housing Experiment in Pilrig near Leith, behind which he had been the driving force, implemented elsewhere in the country. Blaikie hoped that working people would become the proprietors of their own comfortable and spacious housing which would reduce the overcrowding and degradation which made a visit to the local pub for breathing space such a temptation.[14] Blaikie was still in a minority in proposing such solutions for the moral and social improvement of the working class. The prevailing ethos did not see drunkenness as a consequence of poor environment, but rather as the result of the drunkard's moral degradation from which he could only be rescued by the Gospel. Once the individual experienced conversion, the local pub would no longer hold the same attraction. Consequently, the converted drunkard would find himself more socially mobile, as the money he saved from buying alcohol would allow him to relocate to a better neighbourhood. This was a particularly persuasive argument at a time when there was little likelihood of either local or central government intervening to build improved working-class housing. However, this argument depended upon a large-scale programme of evangelization to produce the mass conversions required before any positive impact could be made on the social condition of the country. The widespread belief within the Free Church was that this could only be accomplished through the territorial system: "The thorough

13 W.G. Blaikie, *The Dwellings of the People* (Edinburgh,1851), p.11.
14 Ibid., pp.13-15.

soundness and efficacy of the territorial or district principle may now be regarded as thoroughly proved."[15] More than anywhere else the scheme had achieved considerable success in the West Port, and in 1851, William Tasker felt that there was no more appropriate time to extend territorialism, after Britain appeared to have emerged unscathed from the revolutionary fever of 1848 which had shaken the established order on the Continent. "I know from experience that our communists and atheists are confounded. A few years ago I could not obtain a hearing because of 'liberty, equality, and fraternity,...'[16] It was hoped that the Gospel would succeed where socialism had failed - in the meantime - to achieve the social improvement of the working class.

Although the Census in 1851 had revealed that Glasgow had the lowest level of church attendance among the large Scottish towns, the industrial capital of Scotland was not the only urban centre which the Free Church viewed with trepidation. It was hoped that the decision of the General Assembly in 1851 to create a separate Glasgow Evangelization Committee would free the Home Mission Committee to help other destitute areas in Scotland. The Home Mission Committee had been impressed with the success of the territorial scheme at the West Port, and had been keen to implement it in other Scottish towns, but its financial problems were a barrier to the extension of territorialism. By the General Assembly in 1851, the Home Mission Committee still owed £467 despite having spent several years trying to reduce its debt.[17] Recognising that its financial problems had been largely responsible for its failure to respond to the needs of urban Scotland, the General Assembly of 1851 granted the Committee a special collection (although it was to be shared with the Church Building Fund). The collection proved a disappointment. It fell short by £1,300 of the Committee's previous collection which had been exclusively for the needs of

15 'Scottish Home Missions', *North British Review*, p.221.

16 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1851) p.326.

17 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, (August,1851) p.7. The article does not specify, however, whom the Committee owed the money to.

home-mission work.[18] Particularly galling for the Home Mission Committee was the fact that almost £700 of the shortfall occurred in the Presbyteries of Glasgow and Edinburgh.[19] After the General Assembly had created a separate Glasgow Evangelization Committee, the Home Mission Committee expected Free Church adherents throughout the country to give generously to meet the well-publicised needs of other cities. Instead, the Committee was reduced to complaining at the fact that: "members who live in or near spiritually destitute localities, are still grievously insensible of their duty to the outcast population."[20] The Committee's financial predicament was so acute that its convener, Andrew Sym, informed the Assembly in 1852 that its aggressive work had ground to a standstill because of lack of resources.[21]

While the Committee was disappointed by the amount raised at the collection in August, it had provided enough money to clear its crippling debt. With the debt extinguished the Committee was able to establish some rules to be followed by those applying for territorial missionary grants. Essentially, the Committee would only distribute a grant if the proposed mission was prepared to emulate the West Port model and if the local presbytery had approved the plan. In addition, every prospective territorial mission would first have to prove to the Committee that it had an evangelistic agency ready to work alongside the minister or probationer.[22] From the congregational returns the Committee had received, it was convinced that a central grant would encourage territorial operations throughout the country.[23]

Sym, the Committee's convener, recognised how a home-mission grant would help stimulate territorial work at a grass-roots level, but he also realised that any successful mission depended upon having the right leadership. For

18 Ibid., (December,1851) p.154.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid., p.155.
21 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1852) p.224.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., p.226.

Sym, the responsibility of being a territorial minister was among the most arduous in the world and would test the minister's Christian faith to the limit because he would rarely receive either encouragement or sympathy.[24] Sym placed particular faith in the comprehensive nature of the territorial principle, but he also realised that if any of the missions failed it would jeopardise public sympathy for what he considered to be "the best, may it not be said the last, hope that remains for thousands and tens of thousands of our countrymen and neighbours."[25] With such high expectations it was hardly surprising that Sym placed so much emphasis on the quality of leadership in territorial missions. Likewise, *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland* felt it was through the prosecution of an effective home-mission programme that the Free Church would assert her claim to be the true, national Church of Scotland. "Let her prosecute these labours, and then, though the law-courts of the country should still refuse her the title of 'the Church of Scotland,' they will be unable to deny the fact that she is the Church of the people of Scotland."[26] The Home Mission Committee had undertaken a significant amount of work for existing Free Church members, by establishing stations where there were insufficient adherents to form sanctioned charges, but the Committee recognised that very little had been accomplished for those who had not been part of the split in 1843.

> The ecclesiastical contest, which for ten anxious and eventful years agitated the country, created in these quarters no interest at all; and when, at length, the shock of the Disruption came, the fame of which rang through the nation, and reached ere long the uttermost limits of the civilised world, it made no impression upon them.[27]

Sym recognised the irony of how the Disruption had proved in many

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24 Ibid., (1853) p.201.

25 Ibid., (1853) Appendix xv p.243.

26 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, (September,1853) p.43.

27 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1852) p.223.

ways beneficial to those abroad while "to the ignorant and outcast in our own cities it has hitherto brought no advantage at all."[28] The Disruption had led to a much needed explosion in church building in Scotland, but there was still a feeling within the Free Church that the country remained under-churched. In many ways this was misguided: though Free Church Evangelicals argued that far too few were in the habit of attending church because of long-standing insufficiencies of church accommodation, the Religious Census in 1851 appeared to show that available church accommodation far exceeded the number who were in the habit of attending church. However, to Andrew Sym, the Free Church's church building programme since 1843 had "had scarcely any perceptible effect upon the multitudes who swarm in our lanes, and wynds, and crowded closes."[29] Rather than analyse the socioeconomic reasons why the poorest sectors of society did not attend church, such as pew rents and lack of Sunday best clothing, the Free Church leaders instead made a simple amendment to the old argument that greater church building would lead to increased church attendance. While accepting that Scotland had sufficient church accommodation for those who wanted to attend, they argued that there had not been enough church building by all denominations in certain areas (usually working-class districts of large towns). This had left those areas severely under-churched while other areas had enjoyed the privileged position of having more churches than their needs required.[30] This argument was accurate for many towns, but its widespread acceptance meant that ministers were discouraged from exploring other reasons why people did not attend church. The territorial system increasingly appeared as an ideal solution to the problem of the uneven distribution of churches.

Those who looked for the widespread implementation of the territorial principle welcomed the publication in 1852 of William Hanna's fourth volume

28 Ibid.

29 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland,* (August,1852) p.10.

30 Ibid., (March,1854) p.216.

of the *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers,* which included his account of the West Port experiment. To *The Free Church Magazine,* this coincided with a greater willingness to see the territorial system as "the only scheme that has ever been propounded, really fitted, with God's blessing, to arrest and cure the dreadful social evils of the country."[31] Far from being utopian, *The Free Church Magazine* felt that the territorial plan was perfectly suited to transforming the Old Town area of Edinburgh, something it felt that more secular philanthropists would fail to achieve, however well intentioned.[32] This article placed particular faith in the fact that the Old Town, although densely populated, was a compact geographical space whose inhabitants could still be reached spiritually by a large increase in the number of territorial churches.[33] Similarly, *The Free Church Magazine* was encouraged by the fact that Edinburgh, with a large middle-class population, had a number of influential Christians of independent wealth with time on their hands and the money to finance territorialism in the capital.[34] It also hoped that those interested in territorial work could make greater use of the Free Church's divinity students at New College.[35]

One effort to transform Edinburgh through territorialism had already begun in the Fountainbridge area to the south-west of the Castle in the city's Old Town. In 1834, Robert Candlish had been ordained as the minister of the large and affluent St. George's parish church, and played a leading role in the Evangelical wing of the Church of Scotland during the Ten Years' Conflict. The St. George's congregation had a strong Evangelical membership itself and so a large number stood by Candlish when he left the Established Church in 1843. Those who left the Church of Scotland included many of the congregation's most well-to-do members.[36] Thus, unlike many poorer churches, the St. George's

31 *The Free Church Magazine,* (November,1852) p.497.
32 Ibid., p.498.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., p.499.
35 Ibid.
36 A. Mackenzie, *The Story of St.George's West Church* (Edinburgh,1969), pp.4-8.

congregation never had to endure the experience of holding their services in the open-air, because its wealthy members were able to pay for a new church building almost immediately. The new Free St. George's church was opened on 9 January 1845.[37] Shortly after Candlish became minister of the St. George's parish church in 1834, his congregation had begun a mission programme in a small portion of the parish and so it was not surprising that he initiated a similar operation with the Free St. George's congregation after the Disruption.[38] Impressed by Chalmers' and Tasker's efforts at the recently sanctioned West Port, Candlish's Free St. George's congregation began its own territorial operations in Fountainbridge in 1848 in what was a working-class area to the west of the West Port. To oversee the mission, Candlish appointed a probationer, Thomas Alexander. To assist Alexander's work, the 'parent' congregation also established two day schools and a sabbath school in the area, and a number of its female members volunteered to visit and distribute tracts among the Fountainbridge residents. In addition, a doctor, who was also a member of the St. George's congregation, offered his medical services to the Fountainbridge inhabitants and Alexander and the visitors were told to refer the sick and infirm they encountered to him.[39] It was these territorial agencies, Candlish told the St. George's congregation in 1848, which were best equipped to elevate the Fountainbridge inhabitants both morally and physically. "We know that the plan of Dr Chalmers is workable, because it has already, in more than one case, been wrought out. And we can see no reason for holding that what has been done in the West Port and elsewhere, may not be done in Fountainbridge."[40] The population of Fountainbridge, when the mission began, stood at between 1,000 and 1,600.[41] The district had developed a bad reputation, however, due to the

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37 Ibid., p.9.
38 R.S. Candlish, *Past Memories and Present Duties* (Edinburgh,1854), p.5.
39 Ibid., pp.8-9.
40 Ibid., p.10.
41 Ibid., p.18.

large number of arrests made in the area, and the plethora of public houses, coal depots and slaughter houses it contained.[42]

In 1850, Alexander resigned as missionary and was replaced by another probationer, Andrew Inglis. Under Inglis, the Fountainbridge mission became a Free Church preaching station in October 1851, but in 1852, Candlish began to look for a missionary who could become the congregation's minister after the station became a sanctioned charge.[43] Candlish's choice was James Hood Wilson, a close friend of Glasgow's Dugald MacColl and a former student at Edinburgh's New College, who had participated in the congregation's mission work in Fountainbridge while a student in 1850. After being asked by Candlish in 1852 to take over the mission, Wilson initially declined because he believed that his future lay in Irvine.[44] Candlish, however, remained determined to secure Wilson and two days after being licensed he was persuaded to preach at the Fountainbridge mission in October 1852. This visit must have impressed Wilson as he accepted the job of missionary in Fountainbridge shortly after.[45] In February 1853, Wilson began his oversight of the mission in the upper-room of a Candle House.[46] At this stage, however, an upper-room was all that was required because the mission had only managed to attract twenty-six members.[47] Wilson quickly recognised that he would only succeed in attracting residents to the mission if he followed Chalmers' model and first made an effort to visit individuals in their homes.[48]

The initial annual cost of running the Fountainbridge mission was between £150 and £200. This sum included Wilson's and the schoolteachers'

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42 J. Wells, *The Life of James Hood Wilson*, 2nd edn. (London,1905), p.41.

43 D. Maclagan, *St. George's Edinburgh: A History of St. George's Church 1814-1843 and of St. George's Free Church 1843-1873* (London,1876), pp.115-117.

44 J. Wells, *The Life of James Hood Wilson*, p.33.

45 Ibid., p.34.

46 Ibid., pp.44-45.

47 Ibid., p.45.

48 Ibid., p.47.

salaries and was largely paid for by the St. George's congregation.[49] Like the Tron church's oversight of the Wynd mission in Glasgow, the St. George's congregation developed a wholehearted commitment to the Fountainbridge area. It restricted its own missionary operations in the St. George's parish to the employment of a single catechist so that the majority of the congregation's evangelistic efforts could be directed towards Fountainbridge.[50] The St. George's congregation also purchased for the sum of £850 a large property in the area which included a house, some workshops and half an acre of land. Once the property was secured, the 'parent' congregation turned the workshop into two large schoolrooms which could hold 300 children. The largest of the two schoolrooms was also used as the mission's preaching station where up to 200 adherents could attend.[51]

Robert Candlish was so enthusiastic to see the station develop that in February 1853, he appealed to his St. George's congregation for contributions to build a church for the Fountainbridge mission on the land which surrounded the schools.[52] This reflected Candlish's belief that the transition from territorial mission to fully sanctioned charge with its own church should be accomplished as quickly as possible before a mission station's adherents became disenchanted.[53] When Candlish's appeal was made, attendance at the day school had risen to an average of 140 children with a further 100 attending the station's sabbath schools. Most of these children, Candlish claimed, were residents of Fountainbridge. Attendance at the station's services, while fluctuating, had generally increased, although building a church for only twenty-six adherents may be viewed as highly ambitious.[54] With a site already available and paid for, Candlish

49 R.S. Candlish, *Past Memories and Present Duties*, p.12.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid., p.13.

52 Ibid., pp.17-25.

53 Ibid., p.23.

54 Ibid., pp.19-20. This appeal took place in the same month that Wilson became missionary in Fountainbridge. While Candlish claimed that attendance at the mission was increasing, Wilson claimed that it only had twenty-six members.

estimated that a further £1,000 would be required for the church building. Candlish expected the Fountainbridge members to raise a proportion of the required sum, but he recognised that most of the money would have to be raised by the St. George's congregation.[55] Candlish also warned his own congregation that if they failed to raise the money then many of those who had hitherto been attracted to the infant congregation would become disillusioned and cease to attend the mission.[56] The new church was perhaps not surprisingly given the title of Chalmers' Territorial Church, Fountainbridge, when it was finally opened on 8 January 1854 - with the overall cost of the church and school amounting to £1,290.[57] On 20 July the General Assembly sanctioned the Chalmers' church, and Wilson was ordained as the congregation's first minister shortly after.[58]

Candlish's work on behalf of the Fountainbridge area was considerable, but the mission owed most of its success to James Hood Wilson's relentless efforts to place the mission at the heart of the local community. Wilson managed to achieve the rare distinction of guaranteeing that the mission and then the church remained aggressive in character, something which many former stations found difficult to achieve once their church was full and their initial evangelistic fire had been allowed to die down. More than anything else Wilson looked to gather a congregation from the Fountainbridge area rather than from elsewhere, and so he remained fiercely loyal to the benefit of territorialism. "His chief aim was to bring the gospel, in all its healing power, to every heart and home in the allotted territory, and as far as possible make all the people in his parish worshippers in the church."[59]

To achieve this, Wilson followed the Wynd mission's example, and for nine years held a Sunday evening service which was open exclusively to those

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55 Ibid., pp.21-22.

56 Ibid., p.23.

57 Ibid., pp.28-29.

58 D. Maclagan, *St. George's Edinburgh: A History of St. George's Church 1814-1843 and of St. George's Free Church 1843-1873*, p.118.

59 J. Wells, *The Life of James Hood Wilson*, p.66.

wearing working clothes. To ensure this, two elders were stationed at the door to prevent those who were not dressed in working clothes from entering (an unusual form of positive discrimination for the working class). Before each Sunday evening service Wilson also spent a period preaching in the street outside the church while each house in the district was visited to ensure that every resident knew the service was taking place.[60] Of course, such work could not have been undertaken solely by Wilson and he relied upon a large territorial agency to follow up his own preaching and visitation. Whereas other congregations often found it difficult to recruit, let alone maintain, a large agency, Wilson experienced no problems in that department. Instead, he enjoyed the privileged position of having between 200 and 300 willing workers at Fountainbridge and the only problem that created, albeit a welcome one, was finding sufficient work for those who offered their services.[61]

For somebody who had become a total abstainer at the age of eighteen, it was hardly surprising that Wilson identified drunkenness as the main cause of the social problems in the Fountainbridge district, and which he also blamed for being the main barrier preventing the local residents from attending his services.[62] Shortly after arriving in the area, in an effort to counter the attraction of the local public houses, Wilson established a Chalmers' Working Mens Club and Institute in Fountainbridge which contained a reading room where second-hand bibles were sold, and which offered games, night classes and lectures.[63] This innovation helped ensure that the mission remained the centre of attraction in the community for the entire week rather than simply for the duration of Wilson's services. However, Wilson was always immensely grateful to the Forbes Mackenzie Act in 1853 which he felt was responsible for the first recognisable improvement in the condition of the Fountainbridge inhabitants.

60 Ibid., pp.57-58.
61 Ibid., p.93.
62 Ibid., pp.109-110.
63 Ibid., p.116.

"That (Act) was an unspeakable help to us in all our Sabbath work, little as it may be appreciated by some who never knew anything else."[64] Because of the benefits which derived from the Forbes Mackenzie Act and Wilson's own attempts to provide healthier recreations for the Fountainbridge population, his reputation in the city continued to grow. This was further enhanced by an official report to the City Magistrates which had been prepared by one of their number and was subsequently published in the newspapers. This report drew the Magistrates' attention to the fact that while it had once required several policemen to patrol the area on a Saturday night, that figure had fallen to only one, with the clear implication that they should be thankful to Wilson for the positive influence he had exerted on the Fountainbridge population.[65] Such favourable publicity not only enhanced Wilson's reputation, but also that of territorialism. To Andrew Sym, it was territorial congregations like the one at Fountainbridge which would help the Free Church to win public confidence.[66] Even though the church was subsequently enlarged, Wilson's desire to retain its aggressive character ensured by 1864 that the church was overcrowded with 1,180 members. This was a far cry from Wilson's first service in 1853 before an audience of twenty-six people. Thus, like the Wynd mission, the Chalmers' church decided to have a disjunction with Wilson and much of his congregation leaving to form the Barclay church in 1864. James Wells, Wilson's biographer and an ardent territorialist himself, said of Wilson that: "In every man he discovered the immortal and the possible saint."[67] Without doubt, he was certainly a shining example of the kind of leadership which Sym so passionately believed every successful territorial experiment required. The success of the Fountainbridge mission was assured, and the Free Church had struck another notable territorial victory.

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64 Ibid., p.113.

65 Ibid., p.116.

66 *The Free Church Magazine*, (August,1853) p.377.

67 J. Wells, *The Life of James Hood Wilson*, p.76.

As Britain emerged from the turbulent 1840s period, into the the more stable and prosperous 1850s, an increasing number of people began to question many of the established philosophies of the previous decades. In particular, Thomas Chalmers' contribution to socioeconomic debates, which had largely been shaped by eighteenth-century thinking, began to be scrutinised. One of the first attempts to revise Chalmers' reputation appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1853. This article dismissed Chalmers' reputation as a first-class political economist, particularly in relation to his views on taxation and the Poor Laws.[68] In the *North British Review* of 1856, I. Taylor expressed doubt that Chalmers' writings would in the future be accorded the respect given to Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*.[69] Taylor felt that although Chalmers had made several good points as a political economist, he could not be described as having been at the forefront in that field.[70] Rather than see Chalmers as one of Scotland's great original philosophers, Taylor concluded that Chalmers would be more accurately described as a philanthropist. However, while Chalmers' contributions to the field of political economy were being rejected, it was conceded that his treatises on the parochial system still had value.[71] Along with growing discomfort with Malthusianism, continual developments in Biblical Criticism and biological science further ensured that Chalmers' intellectual reputation would wane.[72] His writings on and knowledge of the territorial system, however, remained sufficiently persuasive to ensure that as a social thinker Chalmers would continue to influence Scottish social policy throughout the century.

William Hutcheson, minister at the Johnstone Free church, had been involved in mission work in Renfrewshire and was typical of this unwavering

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68 W.H. Smith, 'Dr. Chalmers as Political Economist', *Blackwood's Magazine*, lxxiii (May,1853), pp.598-616.

69 I. Taylor, 'Dr. Chalmers' Works', *North British Review*, xxvi (November,1856), p.3.

70 Ibid., pp.7-8.

71 Ibid., p.12.

72 S.J. Brown, 'Thomas Chalmers and the Communal Ideal in Victorian Scotland', in T.C. Smout (ed.), *Victorian Values* (Oxford,1992), p.62.

belief in the territorial system. In 1851, Hutcheson published a book, *Home Evangelization*, with which he hoped to bring his experience in mission work to bear on the subject of evangelization; a policy which he considered to be the only true remedy for the country's social problems.[73] In reality, Hutcheson had little that was new to contribute to the debate, placing his emphasis on Chalmers' territorial plan.[74] Hutcheson did make one original contribution when he argued that the aggressive territorial system was equally suited to the needs of small towns and villages, and indeed that it could possibly be implemented with greater success in small towns and villages than in the cities.[75] As well as demonstrating the continued confidence in territorialism, Hutcheson's views also reflected the concerns of ministers in small towns and villages who confronted social and religious problems which they believed to be every bit as pressing as those in the large cities. While Chalmers' reputation in many fields was being questioned, his writings on the efficacy of the parish system continued to gather converts who were by no means exclusively of Free Church allegiance.[76] Aberdeen was one city which had not responded to territorialism however.

In 1750, Aberdeen's population stood at only 12,500, but by 1850 it had risen to 72,000. Unlike Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dundee, Aberdeen's population remained largely homogeneous in character. This was a fact borne out by the Religious Census in 1851 which revealed that only 20,000 of the city's inhabitants were born outwith the city or county. The census also revealed that there were more English-born residents in the city than Irish-born. Because of its relatively small population it was perhaps not surprising that Aberdeen was found to have church accommodation for 47% of its population, which was the highest ratio of

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73 W. Hutcheson, *Home Evangelization* (Edinburgh,1851), p.82.

74 Ibid., p.94.

75 Ibid., p.103.

76 For an understanding of how impressed the United Presbyterian Church was with the territorial ideal see *The Christian Journal*, (January,1852) pp.3-9 and (February,1852) pp.55-60.

the four cities.[77] The census also confirmed the formidable strength of the Free Church in the city after the Disruption, when 70% of the city's Established Church members and all fifteen parish church ministers left the Church of Scotland to join the new Free Church. In 1851, over 60% of Presbyterian Aberdonians were connected to the Free Church.[78] The census further revealed that the Free Church was responsible for providing a third of the available church accommodation in the city, while the Established Church provided only a quarter.[79] No doubt partly because of its large amount of church accommodation, the census in 1851 discovered that 41% of those who attended church on census Sunday in Aberdeen went to a Free church while only 19% were found to have attended a Church of Scotland congregation.[80] To Allan Maclaren, in his study of the ecclesiastical situation in Aberdeen shortly before and after the Disruption, the Free Church's position of strength in the city at the time of the Religious Census in 1851 was largely due to the fact that each of the city's Free Church congregations were by then settled in their own churches.[81]

Maclaren also calculated that the Disruption secession was most severe in the city's nine *quoad sacra* churches. So severe in fact that the Church of Scotland was forced to abandon five of its *quoad sacra* church buildings and find alternative accommodation elsewhere for what was left of their congregations. Having lost six of its *quoad sacra* churches (another one was lost to the Free Church after a struggle), the Church of Scotland successfully managed to hold on to the remaining three although it had experienced heavy membership losses from each church. Following the Church of Scotland's departure from the six churches, the new Free Church congregations purchased the church buildings on

77 A.A. Maclaren, *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen* (London,1974), p.37.
78 Ibid., p.45.
79 Ibid., p.37.
80 Ibid., p.45.
81 Ibid. See also A. A. Maclaren, 'Presbyterianism and the Working Class in a mid-nineteenth century city', *Scottish Historical Review*, xlvi (1967), pp.115-139. A.A. Maclaren, 'Class Formation and Class Fraction: the Aberdeen Bourgeoisie 1830-1850', in G. Gordon and B. Dicks (eds.), *Scottish Urban History* (Aberdeen,1984).

behalf of the Free Church, leaving the Church of Scotland suitably compensated.[82] Therefore, after the Disruption the Free Church in Aberdeen was in the fortunate position of only having to find eight sites and buildings. For Maclaren, the building of eight new Free churches after the Disruption was typical of what he described as part of the Free Church's war against the Church of Scotland, in that they were often built close to Established Church buildings. This served the dual purpose of embarrassing the Church of Scotland while demonstrating Free Church strength.[83]

To Maclaren, the Disruption in Aberdeen was, among other things, the culmination of the tensions which had emerged between the various social groups within the Established Church. Older middle-class Church members, from the old mercantile and professional groups, were overwhelmingly Moderates. They generally controlled entry to kirk-sessions by co-opting members with a similar social background. They were increasingly opposed by a new style middle class, made up of men involved in the retail trade or property development, who were largely of an Evangelical persuasion.[84] For Maclaren, the decision of this rising middle class to leave the Established Church was partly motivated by their resentment against being considered socially inferior. Consequently, they viewed the success or failure of the new Free Church as a yard stick with which to measure their own status.[85] Once the Free Church had successfully established itself in Aberdeen, according to Maclaren, the enthusiasm of its first few years evaporated and it increasingly became the Church of the middle class rather than the 'Church of the people'.[86]

Maclaren described the Free Church City Mission which began in 1846 as the most ambitious piece of missionary work to be undertaken in the city.

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82 A.A. Maclaren, *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen*, p.59.
83 Ibid., pp.106-107.
84 Ibid., p.93.
85 Ibid., p.94.
86 Ibid., p.116.

However, he also recognised that there were serious problems over jurisdiction between the City Mission and local Free Church congregations. This situation was aggravated by the Free Church's decision to abandon the parish as a unit of administration after the Disruption.[87] Another problem related to the lacklustre manner in which the first City Missionary, McDouall, went about his work.[88] From 1853, the Gallowgate mission became central to the City Mission Committee's efforts in Aberdeen.[89] It was not until 1854, however, when Thomas Brown was appointed missionary for the area, that the work showed positive results. Critics suggested, however, that Brown was attracting members from the Greyfriars Free church in George Street. Recently relocated from Crown Street to George Street in an effort to revitalise its congregation, the Free Greyfriars congregation continued to decline and soon had to be closed as a regular charge.[90] Some suggested that Brown's thriving Gallowgate mission had been a major cause of the decline of the neighbouring Greyfriars Free church. But this is questionable. Like any fledgling territorial operation, Brown's mission relied upon a large agency to help undertake the work of evangelization. With two catechists, thirty lady visitors, twelve weekly prayer meetings, thirty sabbath school teachers to look after 400 scholars, and a penny savings bank, the Gallowgate mission had the largest agency of any congregation under the Home Mission Committee's auspices.[91] Thus, its success was probably more the result of missionary endeavour among the under-churched, than of attracting members away from the Greyfriars church. The mission's progress was so great that the Presbytery of Aberdeen agreed to Brown's request for permission to hold communion at the mission in 1855.[92]

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87 Ibid., pp.169-170.

88 Ibid., pp.171-172.

89 Ibid., p.177.

90 Ibid.

91 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1856) Appendix xx p.101.

92 A.A. Maclaren, *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen*, p.177.

In 1856, the Gallowgate mission became disgruntled with the Presbytery of Aberdeen after it was told to hold its communion at different times of the day than other Free Church congregations in the city, presumably to ensure that individuals were not enticed to the mission from other churches.[93] Shortly after this dispute Brown and his congregation decided to apply for the mission to be made a regular charge, and the Presbytery of Aberdeen agreed to petition the General Assembly on the congregation's behalf.[94] Although it appeared to have acquiesced to the congregation's request, the presbytery also began to make moves to remove Brown from the mission. After learning of this underhand development, Brown and most of his congregation decided to join the United Presbyterian Church. Shortly after, Brown resigned as missionary and most of his congregation joined him in the United Presbyterian Church.[95] To Maclaren, this conflict stemmed from the presbytery's poor handling of the congregation's requirements.[96] Eventually, the Gallowgate mission with a much reduced membership, finally became a sanctioned Free church with its own kirk-session in 1866; precisely what Thomas Brown had been looking for.[97]

Maclaren has identified pressure to contribute to the Free Church Sustentation Fund as being the main reason why the Presbytery of Aberdeen largely resisted mission work which might have the effect of attracting members away from existing churches which were required to contribute to the Sustentation Fund into mission stations which were not required so to contribute.[98] In Aberdeen, the Church of Scotland had wanted its recruits from

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93 Ibid., p.178.

94 Ibid.

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid., p.179.

97 Ibid., p.178. See also *The Witness*, Feb. 5, Feb. 9, May 7, 1863. Although Maclaren felt the Presbytery decided not to pursue a "witch hunt", it was more the case that Brown was unwilling to participate in a "witch hunt", as he refused to take part in an investigation (claiming that he was no longer connected to the Free Church). This investigation wanted to find out whether money had been diverted from the collection plate at the Gallowgate mission for the purpose of financing Brown and his congregation once they had joined the United Presbyterian Church.

98 A.A. Maclaren, *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen*, p.179.

missionary work within the local parish church. In contrast, the Free Church preferred new converts to attend preaching stations from where the best could be 'creamed-off' into existing Free churches in the area. This was a tactic which Maclaren claimed had greater success than the Established Church's policy, even if it was less socially democratic, given that it seemed to segregate the poorest members of society from their wealthier counterparts.[99] To Maclaren, the Free Church's approach in Aberdeen was tempered with an element of expediency after 1843 when it had fifteen churches whereas the Church of Scotland could only boast nine. With such an overwhelming lead, the Free Presbytery of Aberdeen did not want to see the development of expensive infant congregations which might drain the Sustentation Fund. So it tended to obstruct congregations which looked to become sanctioned charges, in favour of a policy which allowed members of preaching stations to join existing churches when they were considered ready. As Maclaren rightly points out, the Free Church faced a difficult dilemma where preaching stations were concerned. After all, encouraging poor preaching stations would have been hypocritical in the light of their repeated condemnation of ragged churches.[100]

Maclaren has overlooked a number of other possible explanations for the Free Church's lack of enthusiasm when it came to mission work in Aberdeen. One of the greatest factors behind the Free Church's commitment to territorialism in Glasgow, and to a lesser extent in Edinburgh, had been the loss of so many of its churches after the House of Lords declared in favour of the Church of Scotland in the *quoad sacra* case in 1849. With commendable foresight, however, the Free Church in Aberdeen did not experience a similar problem. As we have seen, most of the *quoad sacra* churches were purchased immediately after the Disruption by seceding congregations.

Although the *quoad sacra* decision encouraged the Free Church in

99 Ibid., p.187.
100 Ibid., p.201.

Glasgow and Edinburgh to undertake far-reaching territorial work, it was concerned with territorial work for other reasons in those cities. Industrialisation and urbanisation had introduced a number of associated evils to many cities including intemperance, overcrowding and poverty. Further, as the Religious Census in 1851 revealed, Aberdeen did not experience the massive immigration which typified Glasgow and Edinburgh. Moreover, those who did arrive in the city generally came from the surrounding district which helped to preserve homogeneity and overall social cohesion. Aberdeen's tiny Irish and Catholic population did not promote the kind of hysterical fear which characterised the outlook of Presbyterian ministers in the other cities towards Irish immigration. With its more mixed economy, Aberdeen was in less danger from suffering from a devastating trade depression such as that experienced by Glasgow in the 1840s with the collapse of the textile industry. Even when cotton was at its peak in the city it never attracted the large industrial proletariat which arrived to work in Glasgow's or Dundee's textile industries.[101] Instead, Aberdeen was an example of how industrialisation could be harnessed by an urban population without suffering the notorious side effects which characterised industrialisation in Glasgow, Dundee and Edinburgh. It has been argued that Aberdeen could still claim to be Scotland's model city by 1900.[102] Territorialism was as much a response to the problems associated with urbanisation and industrialisation as to anything else. With a relatively stable, healthy population, greater church accommodation than any of the other cities and a formidable Free Church presence in the city, it is perhaps not surprising that there was no sudden rush in Aberdeen to develop new territorial congregations which would have been primarily working class and unlikely to have been self-supporting. It is possible that the Free Church's middle-class members may have used their position to thrust their views and values upon a reluctant working class, but the Free

101 O. and S. Checkland, *Industry and Ethos: Scotland 1832-1914*, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh,1989), p.43.

102 Ibid., p.49.

Church's disregard for mission work in Aberdeen was more the result of its existing strength in the city than hostility to the development of working-class congregations.

Although territorialism was stunted in Aberdeen, the movement continued to gather strength in Edinburgh. One explanation for this was the success of the West Port mission which continued to inspire those wanting to implement the territorial method elsewhere in the city. One congregation which was particularly impressed with the West Port model was Thomas Guthrie's St. John's church where William Hanna, Chalmers' son-in-law and biographer, had been serving as Guthrie's colleague since November 1850. In 1850, largely at Hanna's instigation, the St. John's congregation chose a particularly destitute district of the Old Town as a field for the congregation's mission work. The area chosen was the Grassmarket, to the east of the West Port in the centre of the Old Town.[103]

Hanna and Guthrie organised the Grassmarket mission carefully, but the station did not achieve real success until Thomas Cochrane was appointed as the St. John's home missionary on 18 May 1852. Before accepting the position, Cochrane was already familiar with the neighbourhood, having been a territorial voluntary worker there in 1842.[104] In 1840, Cochrane had entered University to study for the ministry, but at the end of his third year a debilitating illness had prevented him completing the course. After joining the Free Church at the Disruption, his evangelistic skills were recognised by the Home Mission Committee's convener, William King Tweedie, who employed Cochrane as a preacher in 1846 to work at stations where there were insufficient adherents to form a sanctioned charge.[105] In this role Cochrane was sent to various stations throughout the country before being approached by Guthrie and Hanna to take

103 D.K. Guthrie and C.J. Guthrie, *Autobiography of Thomas Guthrie D.D. and Memoir by his Sons* (London,1875), p.504.

104 T. Cochrane, *Fifty-One Years in the Home-Mission Field and Reminiscences 1826-1898* (Edinburgh,1898), p.51.

105 Ibid., p.62.

up the work at the Grassmarket mission. This brought Cochrane back to Edinburgh in a missionary capacity after an absence of eight years.[106]

After returning to Edinburgh, Cochrane was initially discouraged by his new mission field in the Grassmarket. Cochrane found the field particularly impenetrable, a problem which he attributed to the large Roman Catholic population in the Grassmarket area.[107] None the less, before long Cochrane's Sunday evening services and week-day meetings, held in a room in a Grassmarket close, were proving so popular that the room was overcrowded. At one particular Sunday evening service Guthrie and Hanna arrived to check on Cochrane's progress, and asked him whether he would be interested in helping to establish a territorial congregation along the lines of the West Port mission.[108] This proposal had one condition attached to it. Cochrane would have to choose an area which was overwhelmingly Protestant because the existing mission territory's large Catholic population did not bode well for the success of any proposed territorial mission.[109] The area finally chosen was the Pleasance to the east of the Old Town, a district notable for its non-churchgoing and its lack of educational facilities. There could be little disputing the Pleasance's credentials as a field worthy of mission work after it had been calculated that only a third of the area's 2,000 inhabitants attended church.[110] Although Guthrie, Hanna and Cochrane were determined to make a success of their new mission field there were others who felt they would fail to establish a territorial church in the Pleasance because the area already had sufficient church accommodation.[111] Undeterred, the St. John's church carried on with its plans. Immediately after the work began the City Missionary who had been responsible for the Pleasance area was dismissed because the Edinburgh City Mission felt he was surplus to

106 Ibid., p.71.
107 Ibid., p.72.
108 T. Cochrane, *My Life and Work* (Peebles,1900), pp.64-65.
109 T. Cochrane, *Fifty-One Years in the Home-Mission Field and Reminiscences 1826-1898*, p.72.
110 T. Cochrane, *My Life and Work*, p.65.
111 Ibid., p.69.

requirements after the St. John's congregation had decided to evangelise the area. When the work began the 2,000 residents of the district were allocated to visitors from the St. John's congregation, with each visitor having between ten and twenty families to oversee. Hanna preached at the mission's first service in a stair in the Pleasance in December 1852, and his sermon was heard by only seven people.[112] It was not without some justification that a local missionary had told Cochrane when the mission began that: "The district is in a deplorable state - about as bad as could be; I have hardly seen anything worse."[113] Possibly because of this, Guthrie told his elders at St. John's that he would prefer them to participate in the territorial work at the Pleasance rather than to attend both Sunday services at St. John's.[114]

Despite this inauspicious beginning, the congregation was able to dispense the sacrament within eighteen months. The congregation's success was perhaps not surprising given that its provisional kirk-session included such Free Church luminaries as Begg, Guthrie, Hanna and Candlish, four of the most enthusiastic devotees of territorialism in the Free Church.[115] A school was built at the St. John's Hall in 1854 and served for the next five years as both the Pleasance mission's church and school before a separate Pleasance church was finally built in 1859. At one time or another three licentiates had all been in charge of the mission with Cochrane operating alongside them.[116] In their work at the Pleasance they benefited from the help of a number of New College students who undertook visitations and held prayer meetings. One of these students was James Wells, who later became part of the Wynd phenomenon in Glasgow. No wonder Cochrane felt that the: "Free St. John's was in truth a training school for

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112 Ibid., p.70.

113 Ibid., p.105.

114 D.K. Guthrie and C.J. Guthrie, *Autobiography of Thomas Guthrie D.D. and Memoir by His Sons*, p.504.

115 T. Cochrane, *My Life and Work*, p.70.

116 Ibid.

Home Mission workers."[117]

Largely because of his success at the Pleasance mission, Cochrane was unable to return to the Divinity College to finish his ministerial studies. None the less, his work at the Pleasance was so successful that the Presbytery of Edinburgh petitioned the General Assembly to license him with an eye to his ordination as the Pleasance station's minister. Although Cochrane's evangelistic skills appeared beyond question, the General Assembly split into three groups on the question of licensing Cochrane.[118] These three factions included those who looked upon the curriculum lightly, those who felt the curriculum was unbendable and those who felt that the standard procedure could be waived in exceptional cases such as Cochrane's.[119] In a painstaking debate at the Assembly in 1857, the General Assembly avoided making a final decision, and instead remitted the issue to the Presbytery of Edinburgh for further consideration.[120]

When the Presbytery of Edinburgh agreed on 11 May 1859 to apply again to the General Assembly for permission to license Cochrane, those who wanted to protect the curriculum decided to complain to the General Assembly.[121] In reply, Cochrane's supporters sent a petition to the Assembly containing the signatures of 360 members and adherents of the Pleasance mission alongside 500 signatures from other Pleasance residents who wanted Cochrane to be ordained as minister.[122] This show of solidarity persuaded the General Assembly and in 1859 it agreed to allow the Presbytery of Edinburgh to license Cochrane, on condition that once he was ordained as the congregation's minister, Cochrane could not become the minister of any other Free church for four years.[123] Cochrane was

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117 Ibid., p.64.

118 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1857) p.285.

119 T. Smith, *Memoirs of James Begg* (2 vols.,Edinburgh,1885) vol. ii, pp.269-270.

120 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1857) p.290.

122 Ibid., (1859) p.208.

122 Ibid., p.209.

123 Ibid., pp.209-210.

licensed in October 1859 and ordained as the Pleasance church's minister on 12 January 1860. Cochrane's call was signed by 250 members, indicating how the congregation had grown since it began in 1852 with only seven adherents.

With Cochrane ordained as the Pleasance church's first minister the congregation's future looked bright. Through the efforts of Hanna and the St. John's congregation, a small endowment had been collected. The interest on this sum was to be spent promoting mission work in the Pleasance, with an equivalent amount being made available to pay the rents for church sittings for those who could not afford to pay for seats.[124] The endowment enabled the congregation to remain aggressive in character and helped ensure for a number of years that two-thirds of the congregation lived within only five minutes walking distance of the church.[125] To Cochrane, the mission's success was the result of old-fashioned visiting and Gospel preaching, an approach which he continued to believe in wholeheartedly. Looking back on the mission work in 1898, Cochrane observed that:

> Working people want the old story plainly told, with sympathy and kindness. The masses have no aversion to the church and its services. Indeed, during visiting, I often met both men and women who told me that just before my entrance they had been longing for a call from a minister or a city missionary. Visiting has been the cause, under God, of the increase of the Pleasance Church during these five-and-forty years.[126]

The value of visitation became apparent to Cochrane shortly after he began at the Pleasance when he discovered that the area's women had a habit of meeting in the afternoon for a drink. To put a stop to this, Cochrane encouraged the St. John's lady visitors to hold mothers' meetings and to speak to those who came to the meetings about the benefit of gospel temperance.[127] This proved a successful development and before long the schoolroom at St. John's became the

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124 T. Cochrane, *My Life and Work*, p.74.

125 Ibid., p.75.

126 T. Cochrane, *Fifty-One Years in the Home-Mission Field and Reminiscences 1826-1898*, p.94.

127 Ibid., p.110.

meeting place for the mission's temperance society and the local Band of Hope, with 400 people annually signing a pledge card.[128] Although Cochrane's efforts were no doubt significant, he also benefited from the effects of the Forbes Mackenzie Act in the area.[129] The fact that a proposal to dissolve the Free Church's Committee on Temperance was submitted to the General Assembly in 1856 demonstrates how satisfied many people were within the Free Church with the Forbes Mackenzie Act.[130] It is difficult to measure precisely the benefits of the Forbes Mackenzie Act on those in the domestic mission field, but it is possible that many of the territorial missions which were successful in the 1850s would have failed in the 1840s when Sunday drinking was still widespread.

The mission's educational facilities proved extremely popular. After four years Cochrane had succeeded in attracting most of the area's children who were of age to the mission's day school. This was a significant achievement. When the mission began about 200 children in the area received no schooling, but by 1857, only half a dozen children in the Pleasance received no education.[131] William Hanna, who had done so much to encourage the missionary work in the Pleasance, felt the school's success was largely due to the repeated visits of Cochrane and the lady visitors who impressed upon parents the benefits of education for their children.[132] The school proved so successful that its organisers had to find enlarged accommodation in 1857. It was easier to encourage attendance at the day school than at the station's services, but the mission had a considerable impact on the Pleasance population. In 1857, the congregation boasted 112 communicants, fifty of whom had never been connected to any church, forty-seven of them had not attended church for a considerable period, which left only fifteen who had joined the Pleasance

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128 Ibid.

129 T. Cochrane, *My Life and Work*, p.106.

130 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1856) p.260.

131 T. Guthrie, *The City Its Sins and Sorrows* (Edinburgh,1857), p.158.

132 Ibid. p.158.

mission as existing members of another Church. The congregation averaged between eighty and 100 at the forenoon service and between 100 and 160 at the afternoon service, which was a far cry from the seven individuals who attended the mission's first service.[133] Given that some people felt the area was over-churched when the mission began, the success of the congregation appeared to show the superiority of the aggressive over the attractive approach.

The Pleasance mission gained a reputation for impressive missionary work in Edinburgh and within the Free Church, but its notoriety spread after Guthrie introduced the mission to the future Prime Minister William Gladstone and other public figures. Guthrie not only told them about the success of the Pleasance mission and the territorial movement in general, but he also impressed upon them the value of having a mission station in a deprived district overseen by a wealthy, established congregation.[134] Slowly but surely the Old Town of Edinburgh, from Fountainbridge to Holyrood, had become a chain of territorial churches which were devoted to transforming the city's population both physically and spiritually. This was precisely what Thomas Chalmers had hoped for when he began the West Port experiment.

By 1856 the Home Mission Committee understood that it required a considerable outlay in the first five or six years to conduct a territorial operation successfully.[135] As we have seen, the Committee's financial difficulties were acute and so it was perhaps surprising that it decided to undertake a new development which would require additional funding. This innovation involved the Committee appointing ministers who were willing to travel to remote areas for a short period of time in the summer to preach in the open air. To test the suitability of this plan, the Home Mission Committee experimented in the autumn of 1854 by sending deputies to a small district of Aberdeenshire,

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133 Ibid., p.159.

134 D.K. Guthrie and C.J. Guthrie, *Autobiography of Thomas Guthrie D.D. and Memoir by his Sons*, p.504.

135 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, (October,1856) p.71.

and thereafter decided that deputies could be employed successfully elsewhere in the country.[136]

In 1856, four presbyteries were chosen as the recipients of this evangelistic work: Hamilton and Irvine, which contained large mining populations, in addition to Dumfries in the south and Alford in the north.[137] Although it was the Committee's responsibility to appoint ministers (or find individuals willing to be deputies), it was the respective presbyteries which would decide on what particular districts they would concentrate their efforts.[138] The Home Mission Committee believed that only through such a plan could they make a substantial impact upon the social condition of the country. The new development was also a recognition that the Presbyteries of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee did not have a monopoly on social and religious problems.

In 1855, thirty-five ministers volunteered for service as evangelistic deputies and were sent by the Committee in pairs to their allotted areas.[139] After they completed their work, the deputies sent reports of their activities with details of the religious and social condition of the area in which they had operated to the Home Mission Committee. From these reports the Committee felt that its decision to adopt the evangelistic deputies' programme had been justified. In total, the thirty-five ministers had addressed some 50,000 people, half of whom the Committee felt could not have been reached by any other means than open-air preaching. Thus, the Committee had high hopes that the programme could be continued, particularly in mining and manufacturing areas.[140] The use of evangelistic deputies was hardly novel, and evangelistic deputies had been introduced in other Churches, especially in England and Ireland. However, while evangelistic deputies in Ireland and England had

136 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1854) Appendix xiv p.133.
137 Ibid.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid., (1856) p.102.
140 Ibid., p.103.

merely preached, the Free Church's deputies also visited people in their homes.[141] In 1857, some ninety ministers had agreed to serve as deputies and in many districts, especially mining and manufacturing areas, their two-to-four week visits were the only religious provision available to the local population. Before long, the deputies' preaching led to the formation of a number of mission stations which promised to develop into fully fledged congregations.[142]

Despite the initial enthusiasm with which ministers greeted the opportunity of becoming evangelistic deputies, the Committee feared by 1858 that it would have to curtail its operations because many ministers were now declining the invitation to serve as evangelistic deputies.[143] Nevertheless, the Committee was still able to send eighty ministers to twelve different districts for two weeks in the summer of 1858 at a cost of £520.[144] In addition to reaching so many people, the evangelistic deputies' scheme also gave the Free Church's probationers valuable experience as they filled the pulpits of ministers who were employed as deputies. The responsibility of being an evangelistic deputy was the closest thing to being a foreign missionary without leaving Scotland and the visits of deputies aroused great curiosity and interest in communities which often had no other church service during the other fifty weeks of the year.

Along with the evangelistic deputies' undertaking, the Home Mission Committee adopted another expensive innovation in November 1855, after being approached by Crosshill, one of the most promising stations under the Committee's auspices. The Crosshill station asked the Committee to abandon the practice of limiting a preacher's salary to £60 a year because it felt that there would be no incentive for a station to increase its contributions (and therefore its preacher's salary), if the additional money it raised went simply toward reducing the contribution of the Home Mission Committee. The Crosshill station also felt

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141 Ibid., (1857) p.99.

142 Ibid., (1858) Report of the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee, pp.8-10.

143 Ibid., p.67.

144 Ibid., (1859) Financial Report of the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee, p.3.

the existing rules provided no incentive to a preacher, when offered a charge by an established congregation, to stay at a station, because his salary was fixed at £60. After considering the matter, the Committee agreed that whatever the station contributed in excess of what had been agreed would be spent increasing the preacher's salary rather than reducing the Committee's share.[145]

The Crosshill station was not satisfied with simply having this proposal accepted. Instead, it returned to ask the Committee whether it might continue to receive its home-mission grant for a period after it was raised to a sanctioned charge. This would help make the transition from mission station to sanctioned charge easier. In response, the Home Mission Committee agreed on 22 January 1856 to continue home-mission grants for three years after a station had been sanctioned, after which the grant would be decreased by £5 a year until the grant ceased.[146] The Committee's mission stations had been placed in areas where there were not enough Free Church adherents to support sanctioned charges. As industrialisation continued, however, it led to an increase in the number of small mining and manufacturing towns and villages with growing populations. This gave many preaching stations a missionary purpose which had previously been missing from their work. The Committee was, therefore, only too willing to help such stations financially.

For all their benefits, the evangelistic deputies' undertaking and the Crosshill station's proposals were unlikely to be of any direct benefit to the Free Church in the largest cities. Instead, they made demands on the Committee's funds which reduced the money available for territorialism in the cities. In addition to a lack of money, territorialism in the large cities also suffered from a shortage of quality probationers to undertake the work. To remove this obstacle, the Committee decided to employ third and fourth-year divinity students at its Colleges in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow in home-mission work.[147] A

145 Ibid., (1856) Appendix xx p.97 and p.100.

146 Ibid., p.104.

147 Ibid., (1858) Report of the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee, pp.13-14.

similar scheme had already been adopted by the Glasgow Divinity College where the students were involved in mission work throughout their course and these students had proved to be one of the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's most important resources. By compelling students to participate in territorialism, there was every possibility that a future generation of ministers would be as convinced of the benefits of territorialism as their predecessors. Although this plan would be beneficial to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen it would be of no consequence whatsoever to Dundee which did not have a Free Church Divinity College. It was difficult to deny that Dundee was overlooked by the Home Mission Committee. The Free Church in Dundee did not enjoy the position of strength which it did in Aberdeen; nor did Dundee have the administrative importance to the Free Church which Edinburgh did. Likewise, Dundee did not occupy the minds of Free Church ministers in the way that Glasgow did because of its economic significance to the country at large. In many ways, however, Dundee's problems rivalled those of other cities and the city came second only to Glasgow in terms of poverty and social degradation.

By 1850, Dundee had earned the title of 'Juteopolis' having gained a near world monopoly in the production of jute.[148] It was jute which formed the backbone of the city's economy from the 1840s and its mills dominated the city. The Factory Inquiry Commission revealed in 1833 that working conditions in Dundee's factories were harsher than those in the west of the country. Furthermore, the production of jute required dexterity rather than physical strength and so female labour dominated a predictably low-wage work force which simply increased the existing levels of overcrowding and social misery in the tenements around the mills.

Like the other Scottish cities, Dundee proved something of a Free Church stronghold at the Disruption when fifteen of the presbytery's twenty-eight

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148 W. Ferguson, *Scotland:1689 to the Present* (Edinburgh,1990), p.298. See also W.M. Walker, *Juteopolis: Dundee and its Textile Workers 1885-1923* (Edinburgh,1979).

ministers left the Church of Scotland. Evangelical tendencies were even stronger within the city's boundaries where nine of the fourteen ministers joined the Free Church. In terms of church accommodation the city was surprisingly well provided for when compared with Edinburgh and Glasgow. In 1851, Dundee had church accommodation for 44.8% of its 81,494 inhabitants, or 449 seats per 1000 of its population.[149] However, the 1851 census also revealed that Dundee had an even higher Irish population than Glasgow - 19% to 18.2% - which ensured that the city lacked the social homogeneity of Aberdeen.[150] Those who undertook mission work in Dundee identified the Catholic population as the main barrier to the successful pursuit of the work.[151] Despite these difficulties, however, the city failed to press the importance of their case upon the Free Church as a whole. As a result, the Free Church in Dundee was unable to operate extensive mission work in the way it had in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Although the Free Church in Dundee had undertaken two territorial operations (Wellgate and Chalmers), that had been possible only after established congregations in the city - St. Andrew's, Chapelsshade, and Hilltown in the case of Wellgate, and St. David's, St. John's, and St. Peter's in the case of Chalmers - had combined to oversee the missions. In response to its inability to undertake large-scale mission work, the Presbytery of Dundee sent an overture to the General Assembly in 1857 asking the Assembly: "To consider in what way, and on what terms, they may employ the funds placed at their disposal, so as to help forward evangelistic work in the way of Territorial Missions in other large manufacturing towns in Scotland."[152]

The Glasgow Evangelization Committee was by no means in clover, but it was hardly surprising that the Free Church in Dundee looked enviously upon the Glasgow Evangelization Committee's position. The Free Church in Dundee

149 A.A. Maclaren, *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen*, p.37. C.G. Brown, 'Religion Class and Church Growth', p.313.

150 M. Anderson and D.J. Morse, 'The People', *People and Society in Scotland vol ii 1830-1914*, p.8.

151 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1853) p.202.

152 Ibid., (1858) Report of the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee, p.17.

had encouraged the formation of the Glasgow Evangelization Committee because they felt it would ultimately benefit territorial operations in their own city, but that had not happened by 1858. As was shown in chapter two, the Presbytery of Dundee's overture was submitted at the same time that those responsible for mission work in Glasgow were looking at ways by which their own financial position could be improved. After considering the Presbytery of Dundee's overture, the Glasgow Evangelization Committee recommended in 1857 that the Glasgow Committee be dissolved and amalgamated with the Home Mission Committee.[153] Following this, the Home Mission Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to report on how this amalgamation could best take place. After considering the matter, the Sub-Committee suggested that the reunited Home Mission Committee should only give financial aid to establish new territorial congregations if the respective presbytery had given its approval to the work. Furthermore, the Sub-Committee felt that each territorial district should have a Committee on Management, and also recommended that missions should get the cooperation of surrounding congregations so that each territorial mission would have an agency to evangelise their chosen district. Once this had been agreed upon, the Sub-Committee suggested that the Home Mission Committee should give a grant of £60 a year to each station, to be paid quarterly, and that it should also match pound-for-pound what the station raised in excess of £60. The Committee's grants would not exceed £80 or be given for more than two years, if the station within that period had not successfully obtained a site for the territorial mission's future church building. The Committee also expected to receive a half-yearly report on each mission's progress.[154] The Home Mission Committee was clearly determined to keep a close eye on how its grants were being spent, to ensure that only those congregations which were successfully making the transition to sanctioned

153 Ibid., pp.17-18.
154 Ibid.

charges would continue to receive financial aid. The rules may have been harsh to all but the most successful missions, but there was little alternative given the Committee's precarious financial position. Even though the collective balances of the Home Mission and Glasgow Evangelization Committees stood at £2,250 on 31 March 1858, the Home Mission Committee was at pains to stress that it would still have financial problems after the two Committees amalgamated.[155] Unfortunately for the Committee, the General Assembly rejected an overture which would have given the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee an annual collection. Instead, it accepted an overture which merely recognised the need for greater financial generosity towards home-mission work.[156] After the Assembly in 1858, the Home Mission Committee's responsibilities would include Glasgow and its annual expenditure was expected to increase to £5,000. Consequently, an annual collection was an absolute necessity if the work was to be carried out successfully. By refusing an annual collection, the General Assembly simply failed to solve the problems which had led the various Free Church home-mission interests to accept the amalgamation of the two Committees in the first place.

Conclusion

Free from the overwhelming responsibility of providing for Glasgow, between 1851 and 1858, the Home Mission Committee had been able to build upon the progress which had been made through territorialism before the Assembly in 1851. If this was true of anywhere, it was in Edinburgh. Although there had been no initial stampede to implement the territorial method in the capital before Chalmers' death in 1847, after May 1851 an increasing number of existing congregations accepted responsibility for nurturing territorial missions in the densely populated Old Town. In certain areas, particularly Fountainbridge

156 Ibid., p.67.

156 Ibid., pp.82-83.

and the Pleasance, their success was striking. Those responsible for these missions owed an enormous debt of gratitude to Parliament for the implementation of the Forbes Mackenzie Act in 1853. This Act represented a classic example of how the civil authorities could intervene in such a way as to make people favourable to evangelization.

The Free Church in Edinburgh and Glasgow had benefited from territorialism between 1851 and 1858. It was only natural, however, that other towns such as Dundee would feel that they had been deprived because of what they regarded as the Home Mission Committee's preoccupation with their more illustrious counterparts. These towns certainly had serious social problems and high levels of non-churchgoing, but all the money at the Committee's disposal would have been of little use if no one had been willing to undertake territorial missions in those towns. Chalmers, albeit an exceptional character, had managed to get the West Port mission off the ground through the strength of his own personality rather than because of funding from a central committee. The existence of two successful blueprints of territorialism, the West Port and Wynd congregations, also helped to encourage territorialism in Edinburgh and Glasgow, by acting as an example to others who wanted to implement the territorial method. This was something which was not available to congregations in either Dundee or Paisley. In many ways, the Home Mission Committee would have experienced fewer problems and fewer criticisms if more towns had been like Aberdeen.

Although Aberdeen was a thriving urban centre, it was not a centre of territorialism. This lack of missionary activity, however, reflected the kind of city Aberdeen was. Whereas Dundee and Paisley had massive social problems and economies which depended on fragile world markets, Aberdeen appeared to have most of the benefits of industrialisation, but less of the drawbacks. With a mixed economy, a homogeneous population and superior church

accommodation, Aberdeen had a stability economically, socially and religiously which was the envy of other towns and which made large-scale missionary work appear unnecessary.

The Home Mission Committee remained loyal to the principle of territorialism and convinced of the benefits of such a plan, but there were areas of the country where the population was simply too small to establish a territorial church. Since the Disruption, as with other denominations, the Free Church had been convinced that non-churchgoing was superior in urban areas, and so the needs of agricultural districts had been somewhat neglected. As industrialisation continued, however, it transformed a number of previously tranquil rural areas so that towns emerged out of what had previously been small villages or indeed fields. For a number of reasons, primarily the obsession Churches showed for towns and cities, no denomination had made any concentrated effort to provide ordinances for the local inhabitants in such areas. In this environment the Free Church's evangelistic deputies' programme seemed a necessary if ultimately limited stop gap. This innovation also reflected the Home Mission Committee's growing belief that the largest towns and cities did not have a monopoly over social and religious problems. Furthermore, the reports which the deputies sent to the Committee served to fuel the Free Church's concern for the moral condition of rural inhabitants, in much the same way that church attendance censuses had done for towns. Nevertheless, although the Home Mission Committee could not have foreseen it, the implementation of the evangelistic deputies' programme was timely. In 1858, the Churches in Scotland began to receive information about a spiritual awakening which had begun in America. For a number of years, many Free Church ministers had been praying with their congregations for a revival within Scotland which it was hoped would revitalise interest in religion. When it became apparent that the revival in America had spread to northern Ireland, it

created a level of expectancy in Scotland with the Churches believing that the country was about to feel the effects of a spiritual awakening. In the summer of 1859, a number of ministers throughout the country began to see evidence of revivals within their congregations and also throughout their local districts. Spiritual awakenings were not a new phenomenon, but the revival between 1859 and 1862 was the first to take place during the Free Church's short existence. The next chapter will explore how the Free Church responded to the revival in addition to its implications for territorialism. By also looking at the Church of Scotland's activities since the Disruption, it will become apparent that the Free Church was not the only denomination which had come to accept Chalmers' territorial scheme as a possible remedy for both the social and religious problems which confronted Scotland.

CHAPTER FOUR

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AND THE TERRITORIAL IDEAL, 1858-1868

This chapter is dominated by the religious revival between 1859-1862. At a time when the Free Church was concerned about Scotland's spiritual condition, the revival offered the Church an excellent opportunity to restate the Christian message. It is important, however, not to overlook the Church of Scotland's activities since 1843. Immediately after the Disruption there had been little desire within the Church of Scotland to undertake home-mission work. Before long, many ministers realised that the Established Church had a responsibility to perform an extensive home-mission programme. As we will see, it was the territorial plan which formed the backbone of the Church of Scotland's evangelistic campaign. The Free Church's Committee on the State of Working Class Housing reflected the powerful influence of Chalmers' territorial ideal. Instead of looking to the State to build housing, James Begg, the Committee's convener, wanted members of the working class to form building societies. Just as Chalmers wanted working-class territorial congregations to produce independent, self-reliant Christians, Begg wanted working-class building societies to produce independent home-owners and thereby transform one of the country's most serious social problems. In many ways, the congregational mission plan, which the Free Church adopted in 1868, seemed to be an attempt to introduce the territorial plan in smaller towns like Paisley. As we will see in subsequent chapters, the congregational mission plan soon became a rival to the territorial ideal and in doing so it reflected the enormous debate within the Free Church over whether it was a national Church or a gathered Church. In 1860, however, it was the Home Mission Committee's lack of money which was the

main bone of contention for those involved in home-mission work.

Most of those involved in the Free Church's home-mission movement welcomed the amalgamation of the Home Mission and Glasgow Evangelization Committees in 1858, but it was not long before unhappiness developed over the amalgamation. John Roxburgh, the Home Mission Committee's convener, complained in 1860 that: "The Assembly approved the suggestion, and what has been the result? That Dundee has not got a farthing; Paisley has not got a farthing; no separate collection for evangelistic work in Glasgow or in any large town has since been appointed; and the whole liabilities for Glasgow, amounting at the time of the amalgamation to upwards of £700 per annum, were imposed as a permanent burden on the innocent Home Mission Committee."[1]

Roxburgh was particularly distressed by the fact that the General Assembly had not granted the Home Mission Committee a collection between December 1857 and April 1859. This meant that the Committee's increased activities had to be conducted for fifteen months without having its finances augmented.[2] Roxburgh hoped to convince the General Assembly that the Committee needed to increase its missionary efforts if it were to keep pace with the growing and increasingly mobile population in Scotland. While the population in rural areas had increased by 51,000 between 1851 and 1859, the corresponding increase in urban areas was a colossal 173,000. To Roxburgh, this rural-to-urban migration was encouraged by superior urban wages, increasingly efficient farming methods; and the nature of the Poor Law in rural areas which made it economical for landlords to move any surplus population out of their parishes so that they would not be liable for them if they required poor relief.[3]

The population of Edinburgh had grown from 82,000 in 1801 to an estimated 185,000 in 1860. Therefore, Roxburgh felt that thirty-four new churches were required in the capital in order to provide one church for every 3,000

1 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1860) p.67.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., p.68.

people.[4] Similarly, Roxburgh estimated that the population of Glasgow had grown from 77,000 in 1801 to 400,000 in 1860. Thus, he felt Glasgow required an additional 107 new churches.[5] In the north-east of the country, Aberdeen's population had increased from 27,000 in 1801 to 80,000 in 1860, and Roxburgh felt that the city required seventeen new churches.[6] Finally, Roxburgh estimated that twenty-four new churches were required in Dundee to provide for a population which had increased by 74,000 to 100,000 between 1800 and 1861.[7] Roxburgh offered to resign as convener of the Home Mission Committee, and it would seem that he was motivated by the Assembly's poor treatment of the Committee. Nevertheless, Roxburgh's argument had the desired effect. The Committee received a collection for the forthcoming year and he was persuaded not to resign as convener. Roxburgh had good reason to be gloomy, but his outlook would have been less pessimistic if he had given more attention to the religious revival that had emerged in Scotland in 1859. This revival offered the best opportunity in years for those who wanted to evangelise the Scottish population. Scotland had experienced revivals in the first half of the nineteenth century, but the spiritual awakening which began in 1859 was the first since the Free Church came into existence. It offered new challenges and new possibilities to those in the home-mission field.

In post-Reformation Europe revivals were prevalent among those dissenting religious groups which resented being told how to worship either by governments or the crown. In Scotland, this was true of the revivals at Stewarton in Ayrshire in 1625 and at the Kirk of Shotts in Lanarkshire in 1630, where the awakenings largely took place among those groups which opposed Erastianism and Episcopacy. Many of the ministers who played a leading role during the revivals at Stewarton and Shotts later became prominent figures in

4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.

the Covenanting movement. Indeed, the signing of the National Covenant was accompanied by signs of a religious awakening throughout the country.[8] These seventeenth-century revivals were in many ways peculiarly Scottish, but they were also part of wider religious movements. As the population of Europe became increasingly mobile after 1600, a number of Christians in Europe, in many cases to escape persecution, chose to emigrate to the Americas. Although religious persecution encouraged emigration from Europe it often stimulated religious groups to look upon themselves as a chosen people once they had crossed the Atlantic: and also helped to foster apocalyptic views of the New World. This ensured that religious revivals were fairly common in America when evidence of God's Spirit appeared among such groups.[9]

Even more than revivals in the seventeenth century, the pattern of revivals in the eighteenth century has to be seen in the context of North America. The eighteenth century led to a far greater population movement between Scotland and America, and it was only natural that people would take news of the religious climate in the country which they had left to wherever they were going. Greater emigration from Scotland created a number of Scottish communities in America towards which the Scottish Churches felt a responsibility. Therefore, a number of Scottish ministers were sent to America to provide ordinances for the expatriates, and they were able to keep the Scottish Churches up-to-date with religious developments in America. Similarly, Scottish ministers were made aware of American revivals through letters and a number of books which were published for an expectant public in Scotland.[10]

In 1720, signs of a revival became evident in the Northern Highlands. In 1739, the parish of Niggs in Easter Ross experienced a spiritual awakening. These were merely preludes, however, to the main religious revival in the eighteenth

8 D.E. Meek, 'Revivals', in N. Cameron (ed.), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh,1993), p.712.

9 Ibid., p.713.

10 Ibid.

century which took place at Cambuslang in 1742. Once news of events at Cambuslang had spread through Scotland, ministers from throughout the country travelled to the area to see the phenomenon at first hand. After these ministers had returned to their own churches, they helped to spread the influence of the revival by telling their congregations about events in Cambuslang.[11]

Prior to 1800, Scottish revivals had developed out of the distinctive Scottish celebration of communion. *The First Book of Discipline* had suggested that communion should be held four times a year, although many Reformers wanted communion services at least once a month.[12] By the seventeenth century, most parishes celebrated communion twice a year. When communion was held, it generally attracted large numbers of people, including many from the surrounding parishes, who wished to become part of what was a religious event. This was evident during the spiritual awakening in Shotts in 1630 where the revival first appeared during the communion weekend, and during the Cambuslang revival of 1742 which included two well-attended communion celebrations.[13]

Before 1800, revivals were overwhelmingly associated with rural areas. Of course, this was where the great majority of the population lived. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, revivals were occurring in large towns and cities. During the revival which began in 1839, William Chalmers Burns was instrumental in spreading the movement by preaching in a number of urban

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11 Ibid. See also A. Fawcett, *The Cambuslang Revival* (Edinburgh,1971).

12 G.B. Burnet, *The Holy Communion in the Reformed Church of Scotland 1560-1960* (Edinburgh,1960), p.13.

13 D.E. Meek, 'Revivals', p.713.

centres including Dundee, Perth and Edinburgh.[14] The involvement of large towns and cities continued to play an important part in spiritual awakenings in Scotland for the remainder of the nineteenth century, reflecting the steady movement of Scotland's population to urban areas.

The subject of revivals has been relatively neglected by historians of Scottish social and religious life, and most historical interest in nineteenth-century revivals has been focused on the Moody and Sankey revival in 1873-1874. It is important, however, not to overlook the revival between 1859 and 1862 which in many ways laid the foundations for the success of Moody and Sankey. The revival between 1859-1862 confirmed the increasingly international nature of revivals, as it can only be understood within the context of similar religious awakenings in America, Ireland and Wales.

Like a number of revivals in the eighteenth century, the spiritual awakening which began in Scotland in 1859 had its origins in a similar religious movement in America, news of which first began to arrive in Scotland in 1858. In May of that year, Dr M'Lean from the Lafayette College in Pennsylvania spoke at the Free Church General Assembly about the nature of the revival in America.[15] In America, the revival enjoyed its greatest success among children, adolescent males and adult males, many of whom were looking for spiritual guidance after suffering from the financial crisis in 1857.[16] Although the revival in America lost momentum in 1859, its influence had already spread across the Atlantic to the United Kingdom. Before the revival reached mainland Britain, however, the first sign of a spiritual awakening in Europe emerged in the north

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14 Ibid. p.715. See also I.A. Muirhead, 'The Revival as a Dimension in Scottish Church History', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xx (1980), pp.179-196; R. Carwardine, *Trans-atlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America,1790-1868* (Westport,1989); D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* (London,1989); J. Kent, *Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivals* (London,1978); J.E. Orr, *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain* (London,1949); W.G. McLoughlin, *Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham* (New York,1959).

15 I.A. Muirhead, 'The Revival as a Dimension in Scottish Church History', p.183.

16 R. Carwardine, *Transatlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America,1790-1868*, p.159.

of Ireland in 1858.

In northern Ireland the revival was an orchestrated rather than a spontaneous event. The Presbyterian General Assembly sent Deputies to observe the revival in America long before the revival had reached Ireland. After the Deputies had reported favourably on the revival in America, the General Assembly decided to encourage a spiritual awakening in Ireland.[17] Given the strength of the revival in Ulster it was probably only a matter of time before a spiritual awakening began in Scotland. There had been a historical movement of people between Ulster and Scotland which promoted a cross-fertilisation of religious and political beliefs. Considering the west of Scotland's proximity to the north of Ireland and the massive Irish immigration to the industrial areas in the west of Scotland, it was perhaps surprising that the first signs of a revival did not appear in Glasgow and its surrounding counties. Instead, the revival first became apparent in fishing and mining villages in the east of Scotland.[18] The crews of fishing boats from the east of Scotland then brought revival influences with them when they sailed to other parts of the country.[19] Soon the signs of a spiritual awakening appeared in the south-west of Scotland. These signs were particularly evident at Garnoch, a mining district in Ayrshire of 30,000 inhabitants, where thousands began to show a fresh interest in religion. To the Free Church minister, William Blaikie, the revival in Garnoch was largely the fruit of the Home Mission Committee's labours as their evangelistic deputies had preached annually in the area since the mid-1850s.[20] The involvement of the Free Church's evangelistic deputies should not be overlooked in the revival. The evangelistic deputies had prepared the ground for the spiritual awakening in a number of districts and after the revival was underway they helped to spread

17 P. Gibbon, *The Origins of Ulster Unionism* (Manchester,1975), p.46. See also M. Hill, 'Ulster Awakened: The '59 Revival Reconsidered', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* xli (1990), pp.443-462.

18 T. Brown, *Annals of the Disruption* (Edinburgh,1893), p.774

19 I.A. Muirhead, 'The Revival as a Dimension in Scottish Church History', p.183. See also W.J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals* (Dundee,1918), pp.130-140.

20 W.G. Blaikie, *After Fifty Years* (London,1893), p.86.

its influence. The evangelistic deputies' work had not been without problems, but they had managed to maintain an interest in religion in a number of areas which might otherwise have been less receptive to the revival.

As with other Scottish Presbyterian Churches, the Free Church hoped that the revival in Ireland would spread to Scotland. However, Free Church leaders would have also preferred to avoid the incidents of religious excitement which characterised the Ulster revival. From the outset, the revival in Ireland had led to 'physical affections' which involved weeping, quaking and prostration. Furthermore, some areas experienced speaking in tongues, choreomania and leaping. It has been argued that the most physical effects of the revival were largely confined to the lowest classes in Ireland, and that they were particularly common among women. Whereas supporters of the revival in Ireland argued that such outbursts revealed an individual's battle with the Devil, those hostile to the revival felt it was brought on by the colourful and excitable language of preachers.[21] Since the sixteenth century, Scottish Presbyterianism had encouraged a religious conservatism which did not welcome innovation either in terms of worship or theology. The austere nature of Scottish religion was one of the main reasons for the downfall of Edward Irving whose developments into prophecy and speaking in tongues were looked upon as heretical. It was hardly surprising that the Scottish Churches hoped that they could have the revival without its excesses. Therefore, in August 1859, the Commission of the General Assembly tried to encourage the revival in Scotland by appointing a pastoral letter which was to be read to all Free Church congregations informing them about events in America, Ireland and Wales.[22]

Given the enormous proportion of Glasgow's population which was born in Ireland - 18.2% in 1851 - it was only to be expected that the city would become one of the strongest centres for the revival in Scotland. Signs of a revival first

21 P. Gibbon, *The Origins of Ulster Unionism*, pp.49-50.

22 J. Bruce, *The Revivals and the Church* (Edinburgh,1959), pp.3-4.

became evident in the city in the summer of 1859. A number of Scottish ministers were friendly with Presbyterian ministers in Ireland and had been able to keep their Scottish counterparts up-to-date with events in Ireland. As a result, most Scottish ministers were already familiar with what was happening across the Irish Sea long before the revival appeared in Scotland. A number of Scottish ministers used their sermons to pass on information about the Irish revival to their congregations. This was important in preparing them for what was about to happen in Scotland. Also, a number of Scottish ministers visited Ulster to see the revival for themselves. Dugald MacColl at the Wynd church in Glasgow began to pray with his office-bearers for a revival in Scotland in the summer of 1859. After only a few weeks of praying for a revival, MacColl saw signs of a spiritual awakening among his congregation in July 1859.[23] According to MacColl, the first indication of a revival within the Wynd congregation manifested itself in a tearful sabbath school teacher, and then among pupils of the Wynds sabbath schools. During one sabbath school class, Dugald MacColl was told by one of his teachers: "I can't get on with my class; they are all in tears."[24] This was an early indication that the revival in Scotland between 1859 and 1862 would have a particularly strong influence upon the young. The revival at the Wynd church first appeared within the congregation's sabbath schools, but it was not long before its influence spread through the congregation. In response to this heightened religious interest MacColl made his weekly prayer meetings nightly.[25] Among those who attended these additional prayer meetings, MacColl claimed, the unemployed were particularly well represented and there were many people in Glasgow without work after the collapse of the Western Bank of Scotland in 1857.[26]

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23 D. MacColl, *Among the Masses* (London,1867), pp.210-211.

24 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, (September,1859) p.34.

25 D. MacColl, *Among the Masses*, p.258.

26 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, (September,1859) pp.34-35.

The first indication of a revival within the Wynds appeared among MacColl's congregation, but it was not long before it affected the Wynds population in general. MacColl began to hold daily prayer meetings in the area's factories and workshops. He was always careful to attend these meetings and to be the last to leave because he realised that the larger public were carefully watching developments at his congregation.[27] Evidence of a religious revival in the Wynds included increased congregations for MacColl's services.[28] Hundreds, moreover, were unable to gain access to the church. Before long, MacColl's congregation was attracting a number of interested visitors who came to witness events for themselves.[29]

MacColl had initially turned down an opportunity to visit Ireland, but he eventually did travel to the country in 1860 with a number of other interested Scottish ministers. While in Ireland MacColl was told about a case of religious excitement in which sixty people had been in a state of distress. He saw one or two distressed individuals himself, but he did not view such incidents as typical of the revival.[30] There were also some cases of religious excitement at the special meetings which were held at the Wynd church. According to MacColl, these incidents occurred entirely among young girls, some of whose behaviour gave the impression that they were possessed while others were calm but seemingly unconscious. Like most ministers, MacColl did not welcome such incidents, but he felt that cases of religious excitement were brought on by the mental turmoil which people were experiencing at the time. He also claimed that no more than a dozen people in his congregation experienced complete physical prostration.[31]

The Wynd church played such a prominent role in the Scottish revival that MacColl received a number of requests from interested individuals for

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27 D. MacColl, *Among the Masses*, p.288 and p.299.
28 Ibid., p.260.
29 Ibid., p.272.
30 Ibid., pp.248-254.
31 Ibid., p.293.

information. In order to satisfy this demand, MacColl decided to make further use of the printing press. Prior to the revival, MacColl had published a series of papers, *The Wynd Tracts*, and managed to sell 500,000 copies. In order to provide news of the spiritual awakening in the area, the congregation began its own weekly newspaper, *The Wynd Journal*. This paper first came on sale on 1 October 1859, only three months after the revival began in the Wynds. In creating this newspaper, MacColl also hoped to provide information about events within the Wynds to those who were still outwith the church. *The Wynd Journal* was published for the duration of the revival and managed to sell between 10,000 and 17,000 copies a week: which revealed a remarkable level of organisation among the church's leadership. The contents of the newspaper generally followed a similar pattern, supplying information about the work which the Wynd church was doing, providing an article on some feature of home-mission work, and telling the story of a convert.[32] *The Wynd Journal* was read predominantly in Glasgow, and was important in disseminating information about the revival throughout the city.

Given the Wynd church's decision in 1858 to have a disjunction in order to establish another territorial church in the Bridgegate, the revival coincided with what would have been an exciting time anyway for the Wynd church. In fact, the foundation stone for the new church was laid on 4 July 1859, the same month that the revival first became evident among the Wynd congregation. The Bridgegate church was finally opened in July 1860. The proposed disjunction could have seriously weakened the strength of the Wynd church, but the revival enabled the congregation's leadership to replace those who left to form the new Bridgegate church. At the last communion before the Bridgegate church was opened, the Wynd church admitted a remarkable 179 new members of whom only twenty were received with certificates from other congregations.[33] As

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[32] Ibid., pp.302-303.

[32] Ibid., p.309.

MacColl acknowledged, the revival had opened up the Wynds to further evangelization at a time when many thought that the congregation had grown as far as possible.[34] The Wynd church had done more than possibly any other congregation in the city to encourage religion and the revival, and so it was appropriate that the congregation became one of the main benefactors from the revival. In 1861, attendance at the church's Sunday evening service for those in working clothes rose to 484, and the congregation's membership increased from 110 to 270.[35]

As we have seen, the revival was strong in Glasgow and particularly at the Wynd church, but Glasgow was not the only city which benefited from the renewed interest in religion between 1859 and 1862. Another product of the Free Church's territorial programme which was strengthened by the revival was Chalmers' territorial church, Fountainbridge, in Edinburgh. Like most ministers in Scotland, James Hood Wilson of the Chalmers' church had heard about events in Ireland before any spiritual revival became evident in Scotland. Unlike MacColl, however, Wilson decided to view the revival in Ireland before it affected Scotland. Therefore, he visited those areas of Ireland which had been most influenced by the revival, attending and preaching at a number of meetings.[36] After returning to Edinburgh, Wilson did not have long to wait before the revival manifested itself in Fountainbridge.

Just as Wilson had developed agencies which were specifically designed for tackling the problems of irreligion and intemperance when he had first arrived in Fountainbridge, so he now quickly established agencies to advance the revival movement. In particular, Wilson organised special meetings for those who worked in the slaughter houses, at the coal depots and on the canals: and these meetings were generally held at their workplaces.[37] At the North British

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34 Ibid., p.307.

35 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1861) p.101.

36 J. Wells, *The Life of James Hood Wilson*, 2nd edn., (London,1905), p.62

37 Ibid., p.63.

Rubber Works the revival proved so influential among the workers that Wilson was given permission to hold a weekly dinner time meeting which continued for nine years.[38] Rather than alienate working men by having middle-class laymen lecture them on the value of religion, Wilson employed Christian working men to talk to those whose interest in religion was stimulated by the revival. Appropriately, given Wilson's reputation as a muscular Christian, he employed Robert Cunningham, a product of the Wynds mission work and a former pugilist who had lost an eye through his activities in the ring. Cunningham was given specific responsibility for looking after the area's slaughter house workers, and achieved enormous success among his fellow working men.[39] The revival was, therefore, important in demonstrating the superiority of working-class over middle-class lay workers in evangelistic work in working-class districts and in 1861, thirty-three working men were conducting Sunday evening prayer meetings in the Fountainbridge area.[40]

More than any other group, the revival in Fountainbridge made its biggest impression upon the young. Before the revival began Wilson had refused a request to establish a Young Mens' Christian Association in connection with his congregation because he felt there was insufficient interest. As the revival's influence became apparent, however, Wilson agreed to an approach from a student who wanted to create a Chalmers' church Y.M.C.A. The formation of this Y.M.C.A led ultimately to the establishment of three such societies, with a collective membership of 150, at the Chalmers' church.[41] This infusion of young blood enabled Wilson's congregation to grow to 800 members and the demand on the church's accommodation was so great that new galleries were opened in

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38 J.H. Wilson, *These Forty Years* (Edinburgh,1894), pp.13-14.

39 J. Wells, *The Life of James Hood Wilson*, p.64.

40 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1861) pp.98-99.

41 J. Wells, *The Life of James Hood Wilson*, p.65.

1860 to provide additional seating.[42] In time, through the impact of the revival the congregation grew to 1,180 members.[43] In 1864, the revival was crucial in encouraging the congregation's leadership to accept a disjunction, by which Wilson and much of his congregation left the Chalmers' church to form the new Barclay church.

Although there had been evidence of a spiritual awakening in Scotland since the summer of 1859, the subject was not debated thoroughly by the Free Church General Assembly until 1861. After the Assembly in 1860, the Committee on the State of Religion sent a circular to all Free Church ministers, probationers and missionaries in an attempt to gather accurate information about the nature of the religious revival, and to find out precisely which areas of the country were experiencing signs of a spiritual awakening. The Committee was also anxious to discover whether the revival in Scotland had led to any scenes of religious excitement or "prostrations" which, if it had, would certainly have undermined the Free Church's enthusiasm towards the revival.[44] In response to its circular the Committee received 169 congregational returns, which came from sixty-six of the Free Church's seventy presbyteries. Essentially, eighty-six of the 169 congregations reported that they had definitely experienced some kind of spiritual revival, and these eighty-six returns came from forty presbyteries.[45] Therefore, it appeared that over half of the Free Church's presbyteries had experienced some kind of spiritual revival before the meeting of the Assembly in May 1861. The returns also indicated that the revival had first appeared in fishing and mining villages in the east of the country before gradually moving inland.[46]

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42 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1861) pp.98-99.

43 J.H. Wilson, *These Forty Years*, p.16.

44 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1861) Appendix xiii pp.3-4.

45 Ibid., p.5. The Presbyteries of Jedburgh, Wigton, Lanark, Nairn and Lochcarron sent no replies to the Committee.

46 Ibid.

The ministerial returns to the Committee pointed out how they had prepared their congregations by using their sermons to inform people about events in America and Ireland.[47] Bearing in mind the level of expectancy which these revival news broadcasts must have generated, it was hardly surprising that they often led to an outpouring of religious enthusiasm at the first sign of a revival within a congregation. It is doubtful whether any congregation in Scotland experienced a revival without prior knowledge about revival activity in other parts of the country. In addition to the exertions of local ministers, the revival appeared in a number of areas after a stranger had arrived who was able to tell local inhabitants about the spiritual awakenings taking place elsewhere in the country.[48]

The Free Church was particularly pleased about the widespread effects of the revival between 1859 and 1862.[49] This was in contrast to a number of previous spiritual awakenings in which the impact had been localised and generally associated with a single town or area. The increased population mobility which characterised Scotland's population in the nineteenth century, particularly after 1850, is the most plausible explanation for the widespread nature of the revival between 1859 and 1862. First-hand accounts of the revival in Ireland had been brought to Scotland by Irish immigrants, and so it was only natural that native Scots would take news of the revival with them as they moved around the country. With an expanding rail network and fluctuating demands for labour, Scots were growing accustomed to moving around the country in search of employment. Those who had witnessed the revival in one part of the country were able to communicate the revival spirit to areas which had yet to experience any sign of God's Spirit.

As far as the cities were concerned, signs of a revival spirit were particularly evident among existing Free Church territorial congregations, and

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid., p.77.

49 Ibid., p.76.

those sanctioned charges which had started out as territorial missions. At the West Port church between 1860 and 1861, William Tasker had been approached by sixty people who asked to be admitted to communion and two-thirds of them claimed that their interest in religion had been stimulated by the revival.[50] Similarly, John Pirie at the Cowgate had seen the number of communicants at his station increase by 117 to 300 in a single year. Thomas Cochrane's congregation at the Pleasance had grown by 203 members.[51] Most of the Free Church congregations in Glasgow also enjoyed positive benefits from the revival. At the Chalmers' church the minister Donald McKinnon had attracted 500 adults and 300 children to his congregation in the space of a year.[52] In a period of only two years at the Young Street church, the minister William Mackay admitted an additional 102 young communicants to his congregation.[53] The influence of the revival upon the young was a particular feature of the spiritual awakening and the Free Anderston congregation in Glasgow held special nightly meetings for children in an effort to cater for the demand.[54] In a wider context, the revival's influence upon the young in Scotland led to a renewed interest in and demand for sabbath schools. William Dickson, the convener of the Sabbath School Sub-Committee told the Assembly in 1861 that the Committee had received 483 returns from sabbath school congregations, and 286 of them claimed that they had experienced a revival among their membership.[55]

After the disjunction from the Wynd church, the new congregation at the Bridgegate grew beyond all expectations. This growth was in no small measure due to the revival. Initially, a total of 120 members and several office-bearers left

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50 Ibid., pp.97-98.

51 Ibid., p.98.

52 Ibid., p.99.

53 Ibid.

54 A. Fleming, *Autobiography of the Reverend William Arnot and Memoir by his Daughter* (London,1877), p.374.

55 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1861) p.91.

the Wynd church to form the backbone of the Bridgegate church when it was finally opened on 24 July 1860. Although the church received an endowment for its minister's salary and a territorial grant from the Home Mission Committee, there was little doubt that the congregation would be self-supporting once the effects of the revival became evident. Only a year after the church had opened, the congregation had grown to 780 members with thirty-one office-bearers.[56] While the congregation's growth may appear to have been a product of the revival as opposed to aggressive territorial work, the congregation's leadership had not simply abandoned missionary endeavour in favour of waiting for the fruits of the revival to find their own way to the church. Instead, the congregation began its own programme of prayer meetings and open-air preaching. These developments proved so successful that the congregation had outgrown the church's accommodation only a few months after it had opened. Thus, MacColl was forced to look at ways by which the congregation could continue to expand, and he experimented during the communion season by using the City Hall. Even at the City Hall MacColl's services were overcrowded, and the tradition of mass communions continued to be an important aspect of Scottish revivals.[57]

Looking back on the revival in 1867, Daniel Kilpatrick, the missionary at the Kelvin Street mission in Cowcaddens in the north-west of Glasgow, felt that: "In common, I believe, with other missions and churches in the district, we felt that there was a growing seriousness among our people, and there were several indications that the hand of the Lord was about to be stretched out."[58] The first sign of a revival among the population in Cowcaddens appeared at a meeting of the Mill Girls Religious Society in Grove Street which had been formed in 1859 as a non-sectarian group. However, before long, prayer meetings were being held

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56 Ibid., p.100.

57 Ibid.

58 D. Kilpatrick, *The Religious History of Cowcaddens* (Glasgow,1867), p.16.

in every public works in Cowcaddens.[59] Although the Mill Girls Religious Society was not affiliated to any denomination, the revival spirit soon manifested itself in higher attendances at the Kelvin Street mission. Indeed, a few months after the revival began, the hall in Kelvin Street could no longer accommodate all those who wanted to attend the mission's services. With the help of the Free St. George's congregation, a church in Lyon Street was opened as the mission's new premises in 1860, and Kilpatrick was ordained as the Lyon Street church's first minister.[60] Even after the congregation settled in its own church, it continued to benefit from the revival, and managed to attract 184 new members between the Assemblies in 1860 and 1861.[61] On the day that the Lyon Street church was opened, the Home Mission Committee's convener, John Roxburgh, said with some justification, that " In so far as the Free Church is concerned, it may be safely affirmed, that the gracious movement of the Spirit with which we have been blessed has been nowhere so remarkable as in connection with our territorial charges."[62]

In addition to the movement of Irish immigrants and native Scots around the country, knowledge about the revival was also spread by the activities of itinerant preachers who travelled throughout Scotland preaching news of the revival to those communities which had been untouched. Unlike previous revivals, the involvement of laymen as itinerant preachers was one of the distinctive features of the spiritual awakening between 1859 and 1862. The involvement of working-class evangelists and itinerant preachers like the American, Edward Payson Hammond, was such a feature during the revival, that an overture was sent to the Assembly in 1861 asking for the appointment of a Committee to consider how: "the gifts and qualifications of eminent and

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59 Ibid., p.16 and p.19.

60 Ibid., p.21.

61 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1861) p.99.

62 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, (19 October,1861) p.23.

devoted laymen who might desire to promote the work of the revival, may best be made available for the edification of the Church."[63] This overture was intended to help the Free Church respond to the needs of the revival, but the proposal was opposed by a number of Free Church ministers. Robert Buchanan, for example, felt it was inappropriate to raise such an important matter at the General Assembly before it had been considered by the presbyteries.[64] Buchanan essentially misinterpreted the overture, believing wrongly that it made provision for licensing unqualified individuals to preach, which he no doubt feared would undermine the status of the ordained clergy. James Begg initially supported the appointment of a Committee, although he eventually sided with Buchanan. After debating the matter, the General Assembly decided to remit the question to the presbyteries for their consideration.[65] By the time the presbyteries had considered the matter the momentum of the revival had slowed, along with the need to give laymen a more prominent role in revival work. None the less, the revival between 1859 and 1862 had ensured that the Free Church would have to tackle the question of lay evangelists. This need was further heightened by the growth of the Plymouth Brethren which was a direct consequence of the revival. The Free Church viewed the growth of the Brethren and their use of lay evangelists with trepidation. Many within the Free Church felt that it would be better for the Free Church to train lay evangelists and thereby prevent denominations like the Plymouth Brethren from giving a platform to inaccurate and dangerous preaching.[66]

Although it was hoped that the Assembly in 1862 would be missionary in character, it appeared that enthusiasm for the revival had begun to wane in the first half of 1862.[67] Robert Howie, the minister at the Wynd church, did not feel

63 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1861) p.113.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid., pp.113-114.
66 Ibid., (1868) p.133.
67 Ibid., (1862) p.183.

the effects of the revival were wearing off, but he acknowledged that stories about the revival had become so commonplace that people no longer reported each event, whether of major or minor significance, with the level of enthusiasm and amount of detail which they had previously.[68] In many ways this was an unavoidable aspect of a religious revival. What made a spiritual awakening so unique was the intensity and enthusiasm for religion it created as its influence spread to new districts. Once most areas of the country had experienced the revival for themselves, however, it was only natural that people would adopt a matter-of-fact attitude towards events which had initially appeared so extraordinary.

The declining enthusiasm for the revival was evident from the number of returns which were sent to the Committee on the State of Religion in 1862. Only fifty-six churches from thirty-eight presbyteries replied to the Committee's circular. Even more ominously, only eighteen churches reported that they had experienced a revival within their congregation and local district in the previous year.[69] Overall, this meant that 103 Free Church congregations, from approximately 700, claimed that they had experienced a revival between 1860 and 1862. Julius Wood, the Committee's convener, therefore concluded that only a minority of people had been affected by the revival, even in those areas where it had been most influential. Although Wood felt that most of those who had been touched by the revival were growing in the faith, he argued that the vast majority of the population had remained unaffected by the revival, and regretted that many of those who had shown a fresh interest in religion had already returned to their old habits.[70] There was clearly a degree of pessimism at the Assembly in 1862, but the series of revivals which took place in Scotland between 1859 and 1862 produced a number of benefits to the Churches in Scotland. In the short-term it has been calculated that membership of the Presbyterian Churches

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid., p.176.

70 Ibid.

in Scotland increased by 10% as a consequence of the revival.[71]

As far as the Free Church was concerned, the revival was a momentous and welcome event. The Free Church had been particularly pleased by the role which their evangelistic deputies had played in preparing the ground for the revival in a number of areas with their two-to-four week visits which had often provided the only contact with organised religion.[72] The evangelistic deputies had also helped to spread the influence of the revival to districts which had still to feel the effects of the spiritual awakening. The revival, however, represented the high-water mark for the evangelistic deputies' programme. As the effects of the spiritual awakening faded, fewer ministers were willing to undertake the work. Nevertheless, it was in no small measure due to the evangelistic deputies' work that for many years the Free Church could continue to report on the beneficial long-term effects of the revival of 1859-1862, even as late as the General Assembly in 1887.[73]

Some of the biggest beneficiaries from the revival were the Free Church's territorial missions, and those sanctioned congregations which had started out as territorial missions. The success of the territorial stations was probably due to the fact that those congregations already had aggressive, missionary agencies to deal with people whose interest in religion was stimulated by the revival. This was not an argument, however, which the Free Church would have entertained. Instead, the success of the revival at territorial missions was seen as God's reward to those congregations which had laboured long and often thanklessly in some of Scotland's most socially destitute districts. The revival's success in the territorial congregations strengthened the position of those who wanted to see territorialism extended throughout the country.

The relative lack of religious excitement during the revival of 1859-1862 encouraged the Free Church to adopt a more positive attitude towards

71 J.E. Orr, *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain*, pp.58-78.

72 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1866) p.138.

73 Ibid., (1887) p.75.

revivalism. The returns to the Committee on the State of Religion had shown that in many cases undue religious excitement within congregations had disappeared once it had been discouraged by the ministers.[74] There were incidents of religious excitement such as at the Wynds, but they remained generally isolated cases and were certainly not typical of the revival in Scotland between 1859 and 1862. The conservatism of Scottish Presbyterianism may have been one reason why such religious excitement was frowned upon. Further, outpourings of religious enthusiasm could easily have been used by those who wanted to discredit the revival. Thus, most Free Church ministers were delighted that such scenes were so rare. Instead, the revival generated a warm and genuine enthusiasm for religion which appeared so positive that people began to pray for another revival shortly after the effects of the spiritual awakening of 1859-1862 had faded. Consequently, when the Moody and Sankey revival began in 1873, most Free Church ministers and members were prepared to welcome it unequivocally.

The revival of 1859-1862 also had serious implications for relations between the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland. Revivals tend to encourage an element of cooperation which in turn creates greater understanding of other Churches. In 1863, the Free Church entered into negotiations with the United Presbyterian Church to look at the possibility of union between the two denominations. The United Presbyterian Church was overwhelmingly in favour of union, but although a large section of the Free Church also favoured union, a 'Constitutionalist' group opposed the measure when it became clear that union would require a fundamental change in the Free Church's position on the nature of civil society. Nevertheless, union negotiations dominated relations between the two Churches in the period between 1863 and 1873. The revival of 1859-1862 had not only shown how much the Churches had in common, but had encouraged the belief that Presbyterian reunion was a worthwhile goal in itself.

74 Ibid., (1861) Appendix viii and (1862) Appendix xiv.

Of all Scotland's Presbyterian denominations, the Free Church had benefited most from the revival. The positive effects of the spiritual awakening had also enabled the Church of Scotland to build upon the progress which it had made in the 1850s. Since its years of spiritual torpor between 1843 and 1850, the Established Church had emerged as a more united and disciplined body under the leadership of some imaginative and socially aware ministers. Like their Free Church counterparts these ministers were willing to respond to the new challenges which were placed before them by an increasingly urbanised and industrialised country. The Free Church liked to think that it had a monopoly on aggressive missionary work amongst the Scottish Churches, but from the 1850s the Church of Scotland increasingly entered the home-mission field. In doing so, the Established Church discovered a renewed enthusiasm for Chalmers' territorial ideal, especially as the passions which had been aroused by the Ten Years' Conflict cooled.

After the Disruption it was hardly surprising that the Church of Scotland, shocked by the loss of so many of its members and ministers to the Free Church, was in no mood to enter a period of sustained church building or mission work. Although church building did not seem an immediate priority following the Disruption, the Church of Scotland received a boost from an Act of Parliament commonly referred to as the Sir James Graham Act. This Act enabled the Church of Scotland to create *quoad sacra* churches providing that an annual income of £120 had been secured for the minister's salary. This Act seemed a timely shot in the arm for the Church of Scotland, but it was evident that considerable sums of money were required to ensure its success. To provide an endowment of £120, a sum of £3,000 had to be invested; the endowment of 200 churches would require an annual income of £24,000 or an invested capital of £600,000.[75] The favoured plan would have been to attract State endowment, but that had been rejected in 1838 and so any plan which involved looking to Parliament seemed both

[75] A.H. Charteris, *The Life of The Reverend James Robertson* (Edinburgh,1863), p.230.

impractical and unrealistic. The only alternative lay in an appeal to the Scottish people, who it was hoped would set sufficient value on their Established Church to pay for an endowed ministry out of their own pockets.

The individual given responsibility for this was James Robertson, the Professor of Church History at the University of Edinburgh. After cooperating closely with Chalmers as a member of the Church Extension Committee in the 1830s, Robertson was asked in 1846 to complete the half-finished work of the 1830s by securing endowments for some 200 church-extension charges. Having been a member of the new Committee to Promote the Interests of Chapels of Ease since 1843, Robertson was a natural choice to take over as convener in 1846, and one of his first measures was to change the name of the Committee to the Committee on Endowment.[76] The Church of Scotland, like the Free Church, was aware of the social breakdown that was taking place in many urban areas and, like the Free Church, the Established Church usually saw the solution in terms of increasing the supply of religious ordinances to the trouble spots. Therefore, the need to endow ministers who were generally operating in the areas of greatest social fragmentation became of even greater importance. At the General Assembly in 1847, however, Robertson reported that only £15,000 had been raised for endowments in the previous year.[77] This was an insignificant sum when compared to the money raised in the Free Church at the same time for a number of different schemes. No doubt there were many within the Church of Scotland who could not see the sense in Robertson's plan. They looked sceptically upon Robertson's insistence that the Church of Scotland would have to work hard to demonstrate its relevance to an increasingly urbanised and industrialised country in order to ensure its survival as an Established Church. Furthermore, Robertson was arguing for precisely what Thomas Chalmers had long advocated, and Chalmers remained an anathema in

76 Ibid., p.231.

77 A.H. Charteris, *A Faithful Churchman* (Edinburgh,1897), p.125.

the Church of Scotland owing to his involvement in the Ten Years' Conflict.

Just as the lethargic endowment scheme appeared to be heading nowhere, it suddenly received a boost. As we have seen, the House of Lords decided in 1849 that the Church of Scotland had the strongest claim to the *quoad sacra* churches and demanded that the Free Church return those churches it still occupied. Thus, the success of the endowment scheme took on an even greater sense of importance. In an effort to generate enthusiasm for the plan, Robertson regularly undertook exhausting lecture tours throughout the country. He repeatedly stressed that the scheme was not a sectarian measure aimed at resurrecting the Church of Scotland's fortunes.

By the mid-1850s, the endowment scheme had failed to meet Robertson's expectations. Before 1854, the endowment programme had managed to build thirty parish churches at a cost of £130,000. This money had generally been spent on the Church of Scotland's wealthiest chapels, however, and had done nothing for those in the poorest districts which were crying out for some form of central grant to augment their local efforts.[78] To provide for these areas, in 1854, Robertson devised a Provincial Endowment Scheme which divided Scotland into five provinces. If a province had raised £40,000 locally then the Committee promised to give two-thirds of the capital required for a church building to each of the first twenty chapels that were ready with the rest of the money.[79]

In the 1850s, the Church of Scotland's rivalry with the Free Church was giving an extra edge to their efforts in home-mission work. Furthermore, by 1854, the Church of Scotland had developed thriving congregations in a number of the *quoad sacra* churches which had been returned by the Free Church in 1849. This gave Robertson's endowment scheme a greater prominence within the Established Church. This was certainly the case in Glasgow. The Free Church had criticised the Church of Scotland in 1849 by claiming that it had insufficient

78 A.H. Charteris, *The Life of the Reverend James Robertson*, p.318
79 Ibid., pp.318-319.

adherents to fill the *quoad sacra* churches in Glasgow. But by 1854, the Established Church had turned most of the *quoad sacra* churches in the city into successful congregations.[80] In many ways this success was not surprising. It was only natural following the Disruption that the Church of Scotland would spend a few years nursing its wounds. Before long, however, the Established Church realised that it would have to enter the home-mission field if it was not to be usurped by the Free Church. In addition, the Church of Scotland accepted a responsibility to undertake evangelistic work because of its position as the Established Church in Scotland. Upon entering this work, the Church of Scotland soon discovered that its Establishment status gave it a particular advantage over the Free Church when evangelising the Scottish public. As the Church of Scotland's *Home and Foreign Missionary Record* put it in December 1854:

> In the meantime, from various considerations - from our antecedents as an Established Church, and the relations in which, as such, we stand to the people, - this work is peculiarly our own; and no other religious body either lies under the same obligation, or possesses the same ability to perform it.[81]

The increased generosity towards the Endowment scheme after 1854 enabled Robertson to tell the General Assembly in 1858 that the south-eastern province of the country, which included Edinburgh, had been the first region to raise the stipulated £40,000.[82] It was a matter of consternation, however, that the Lanarkshire region, which included Glasgow, never managed to raise the full £40,000. Robertson, who was extremely sensitive to any form of criticism, interpreted this as a show of hostility to himself, and had to be persuaded to reverse his decision to resign as leader of the endowment campaign.[83] The failure of the richest region in Scotland to raise £40,000 for the Established

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80 *The Home and Foreign Missionary Record of the Church of Scotland*, (February,1854) pp.32-34.

81 Ibid., (December,1854) p.295

82 A.H. Charteris, *A Faithful Churchman*, p.173.

83 Ibid., p.176.

Church reflected the Free Church's popularity among the commercial middle class in Glasgow. However, given the Free Church Glasgow Evangelization Committee's continual financial difficulties in the 1850s, it would appear that wealthy members of both Churches in Glasgow had more important outlets for their money than helping to establish churches in the poorest districts of the city.

Although Lanarkshire proved a disappointment in terms of the endowment campaign, other districts of the country responded more favourably to Robertson's appeals for money. The endowment report at the Assembly in 1860 proved to be the most promising yet. Some £54,000 had been raised throughout the country during the preceding year, and the south-west region had now managed to raise a total of £40,000.[84] Before the next Assembly Robertson had died at the age of only fifty-seven. In total, the endowment campaign under Robertson's oversight raised almost £400,000. This figure rose to £500,000 when local contributions were included.[85] Given that subscriptions were payable over five years the figure raised was in many ways higher. While Chalmers, Robertson's mentor in so many ways, had devoted a significant proportion of his career to working among the poor and religiously indifferent, Robertson had worked along different lines by trying to ensure that the Church of Scotland was at least present among the poor.[86] Robertson's efforts often went unrecognised by his contemporaries, but he had given the Church of Scotland a prominence in national life and a relevance to the Scottish public which helped to remove the very real danger which existed after the Disruption of it being replaced as the Established Church, in practice if not in law, by the Free Church. As Robertson's biographer, Archibald Charteris, stated:

> He had not only recruited the shattered strength and revived the dormant life of his own National Church, but had taught and exemplified the condition on which the existence of Church

84 Ibid., p.183.

85 Ibid., p.186.

86 G. Wilson, 'James Robertson', in *Scottish Divines 1505-1872* (St Giles Lectures, 3 Edinburgh,1883), pp.348-349.

establishments will henceforth depend.[87]

Robertson had also given credibility and respectability to Thomas Chalmers' territorial ideal within the Church of Scotland at a time when Chalmers was still disliked by many because of his seemingly intransigent behaviour during the Ten Years' Conflict. After Robertson's death his commitment to the territorial ideal was carried on by other leaders in the Church of Scotland such as Norman and Donald Macleod, Charteris and Archibald Scott. These ministers shared Robertson's belief in the Church of Scotland as the rightful Established Church in Scotland, and also his conviction that this could be demonstrated most effectively through the widespread implementation of the territorial system.

The Church of Scotland had made great strides in the home-mission field in the 1850s, but it still lagged some way behind the Free Church. In Edinburgh, Free Church territorial missions were such a prominent feature in the city's Old Town that John Roxburgh, the Home Mission Committee's convener, felt in 1859 that "Edinburgh will thus soon be an example to the whole of this country, as the most thoroughly cultivated territorial city."[88] However, although the Free Church in Edinburgh had built upon Chalmers' earlier efforts at the West Port it did not prevent an attack by several Church of Scotland ministers who accused the Free Church of having deserted the poorest areas in favour of middle-class districts of the city.[89] The Free Church's obvious commitment to territorialism seemed to discredit this argument, but such outbursts were an important element in the Church of Scotland's propaganda attack against their rivals. As an Established Church, the Church of Scotland could claim that it had a responsibility to provide for the entire population while arguing that the Free Church, as essentially a Voluntary Church, would have little option but to

87 A.H. Charteris, *The Life of the Reverend James Robertson*, p.373.

88 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1859) p.195.

89 Ibid., (1863) pp.135-136.

favour those who provided the bulk of its money. Therefore, Church of Scotland ministers were quick to point to any sign of a middle-class bias, whether real or imaginary, within the Free Church. Where Edinburgh was concerned, however, this slur from Church of Scotland ministers had little real foundation. Thomas Guthrie argued in reply that if any denomination could be accused of having deserted the poor in Edinburgh then it was the Church of Scotland.[90] In the west of the Old Town, Guthrie noted, the Free Church had established territorial churches at Fountainbridge and the West Port, but there were no corresponding Church of Scotland churches. Similarly, the Free Church had established a territorial church in the Grassmarket and although William Robertson of New Greyfriars performed missionary work for the Church of Scotland in the Grassmarket, they had not established a territorial mission in the district. The Free Church had also established territorial churches at Cowgatehead and at the Cowgate, but the Church of Scotland had failed to do the same. There was a similar situation in the east of the Old Town where the Free Church had established territorial churches at Holyrood and at the Pleasance without the Church of Scotland creating rival missions in those districts.[91] Since the Disruption, the Free Church had led the way among Scottish Churches in terms of home-mission work. Even after the Church of Scotland entered the home-mission field it chose to implement Chalmers' territorial plan which had been warmly embraced for some time by the Free Church. The Church of Scotland had experienced a renaissance since the Disruption, but was in no position to denigrate the Free Church's home-mission commitment or to claim to have surpassed their efforts.

The Church of Scotland was not the only threat to the Free Church's position however. For most of the nineteenth century, both local and central governments had generally been content to leave social problems alone in the

90 Ibid.

91 Ibid.

belief that the nation's increasing prosperity would soon be reflected in a higher standard of living for all. As we have seen, it was often ministers who were involved in home-mission work, such as William Tasker and Robert Buchanan, who realised that government intervention was required to remove the most intractable urban social problems. Dugald MacColl was a worthy successor to these two ardent territorialists. After his experience of the Wynds, MacColl was as well acquainted with social problems as anyone. In many ways, the Wynds difficulties had been exacerbated by the arrival of large numbers of poor, Irish Catholics from the mid-1840s. For his part, MacColl recognised and regretted how the Glasgow authorities "had allowed, for fifty years, this part of the city gradually to fall almost exclusively into the hands of one class of people, alien to many of our principles and habits."[92] Predictably, MacColl had little time for the religious beliefs of Catholics or for their social habits, but he did recognise that the environment in the Bridgegate played an important part in determining their behaviour. Therefore, MacColl put a proposal before some members of the Town Council which aimed to create a long open street through the entire Wynds district.[93] It was hoped that this street would open up the Wynds to some badly needed ventilation while also reducing the area's chronic overcrowding. MacColl also proposed to purchase some of the Town Council's property in the area to use as meeting places for the Bridgegate church's educational agencies.[94]

MacColl would no doubt like to have taken the credit for himself, but it is unlikely that the Town Council's subsequent slum clearance programme was motivated by the efforts of the minister at the Bridgegate church. Nevertheless, within six months of MacColl's appeal, some 1,500 people had been forced to find alternative accommodation elsewhere after their houses had been demolished.[95]

92 D. MacColl, *Among the Masses*, pp.346-347.
93 Ibid., p.348.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid., p.349.

MacColl encouraged this exodus from the Bridgegate when his congregation bought some of the council's property in the area. There was little need for MacColl to act as a one-man slum-clearance programme, however, as the proposed Union Railway Line, if implemented, would lead to the demolition of a number of the city's most socially destitute districts. Once the Railway Company's Bill had passed through Parliament, the Railway Company agreed on a plan with the Town Council which would redevelop some of the worst quarters of the city.[96] First, however, Parliament had to pass a City Improvement Act for Glasgow's Town Council in 1866. This Act changed the nature of Glasgow's city centre forever by giving Glasgow's Town Council the power to demolish housing. Consequently, between 1866 and 1914, some 16,000 houses were demolished in the city and a further 5,000 houses were closed.[97] It had been apparent for some time that something had to be done about Glasgow's poor housing. The census in 1861 had revealed that 100,000 people in the city lived in houses of only one room, and 73.4% of the population lived in houses of only one or two rooms. Therefore, the power to clear the city's slum areas which the Glasgow City Improvement Act conferred upon the Glasgow Town Council was long overdue. From 1866 the city also employed its own Sanitary Inspectors, and accepted responsibility for cleaning the streets.

Although local authority intervention was still in its infancy, the 1860s marked a sea change in the Glasgow Town Council's approach towards social problems, as its members accepted the need for local authority intervention in order to regulate the environment. The inhabitants of Glasgow had received their first supply of clean water in 1859 when the Loch Katrine water works were opened, but the city's death rate had continued to increase, albeit at a lower rate than it would have without the clean water supply. Therefore, the 1860s led to a realisation that greater local authority intervention was required to tackle the

96 Ibid., p.350.

97 J. Butt, 'Housing', in R.A. Cage (ed.), *The Working Class in Glasgow 1750-1914* (London,1987), pp.46-47.

city's social problems. With the municipalisation of gas in 1867, the Town Council further recognised the benefits which could be derived from the public ownership of an important utility. This was in stark contrast to the corruption and inefficiency which had characterised the control of an important resource such as gas when it was in the hands of a private company.[98] In the 1850s and 1860s a small number of ministers involved in territorialism, such as Robert Buchanan, had pleaded for government intervention, preferably by local authorities, in order to regulate social conditions in the city in which they operated. Previously, many ministers had glibly believed that conversion of individuals would lead to social improvement. They had assumed that only a massive programme of evangelization would bring about widespread social benefits to the country at large. However, as more ministers entered the field of home-mission work they came into contact with the most appalling scenes of social misery and degradation. The scale of these problems appeared so great that many ministers like Buchanan and MacColl became convinced that there was no alternative but for local authorities to work in conjunction with the Churches to improve the country's social fabric. It was also hoped that this intervention would help to elevate the material condition of the population and make people more amenable and receptive to the Church's attempts at evangelization.

That this intervention first took place in Glasgow was not surprising. After all, it was in Glasgow that the characteristics of Victorian industrialisation - enormous wealth alongside degrading poverty - were most evident in Scotland. This is not to suggest that the Town Council had become socialist. Instead, its attempts at intervention were largely a pragmatic response to the obvious needs of the city's population. Consequently, when it intervened, Glasgow's Town Council was able to make a virtue out of what was actually a social necessity.[99]

98 T. Hart, 'Urban Growth and Municipal Government; Glasgow in a Comparative Context, 1846-1914', in A. Slaven and D.H. Aldcroft (eds.), *Business, Banking and Urban History* (Edinburgh,1982), pp.193-220. See also A. Shaw, *Municipal Government in Great Britain* (New York,1895).

99 I. Maver, 'Politics and Power in the Scottish City: Glasgow Town Council in the Nineteenth Century', in T.M. Devine (ed.), *Scottish Elites* (Edinburgh,1994), p.115.

Although an important start was made by the Glasgow Town Council in terms of intervention, it was evident that the old ideology of *laissez-faire* had not been discarded entirely. This was apparent in the Town Council's attitude towards housing. The Council accepted responsibility for destroying some of the city's most dangerous and overcrowded housing, but it was unwilling to replace the demolished housing stock by building council housing and instead concentrated on purchasing existing properties. This was perhaps not surprising as property development was a profitable business and any attempt at Council house building was likely to encroach on a number of powerful vested interest groups. As a result, the Council did not begin building its own housing until the late 1880s. In the interim period, however, the Council merely exacerbated the problem of overcrowded housing in Glasgow as the rate of private house building could not keep pace with the number of houses which the Council demolished. The Town Council's refusal to build new housing was far from ideal. It did not unduly concern the Churches however. Nobody did more in the third quarter of the nineteenth century to stimulate debate and action over the country's poor housing than James Begg. But even Begg did not advocate State-built housing in the 1860s.

James Begg's interest in housing had its roots in his time as the minister at the parish of Liberton in the outskirts of Edinburgh, which, although a wealthy parish, contained a good deal of poor housing.[100] After the Disruption, however, Begg was not alone among Free Church ministers in being concerned over the country's housing. William Blaikie was also shocked by the situation he encountered in Pilrig in Edinburgh, after moving there from Aberdeenshire in 1844. With the help of some influential supporters Blaikie helped to form the Pilrig Model Dwellings Company which aimed to improve working-class

100 T. Smith, *Memoirs of James Begg* (2 vols.,Edinburgh,1885), vol. i, pp.307-313. See also J. Begg, *Happy Homes for Working Men* (Edinburgh,1866); J. Begg, *Scotland's Demand for Electoral Justice* (Edinburgh,1857); J. Begg, *The Cause and Probable Remedies of Pauperism in Scotland* (Edinburgh,1870); J. Begg, *The Ecclesiastical and Social Evils of Scotland and How to Remedy Them* (Edinburgh,1871).

housing.[101] Having obtained a site on Leith Walk, the Company opened its first row of cottages in 1849. By the time the Company was disbanded in 1862, it had managed to build sixty-two dwellings at a cost of £7,000 with rents varying from between 5 guineas to £18.[102] While the houses the Company built were of good quality, their modest number made little impact in improving the city's poor housing.

James Begg recognised the Company's shortcomings. On 10 January 1850, speaking at a public meeting at the College Street church in Edinburgh, Begg announced an eight-point social charter which included the need for better working-class housing.[103] This meeting led to the formation of the Scottish Social Reform Association on 18 January 1850. Begg's new Association concentrated on housing. At a meeting of the Association on 6 March 1851 in his own Newington church, Begg gave a lecture on how the working class could acquire improved housing.[104] Begg was impressed by the efforts of working men in Birmingham who had formed an Association in order to buy land upon which they built working-class housing.[105] At the first annual meeting of the Social Science Association in Birmingham in 1857, Begg delivered a speech in which he criticised the inadequate housing in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and lambasted the state of rural housing.[106]

From 1858, Begg began a campaign to stimulate interest both in the Free Church and in the country at large about the state of working-class housing. In

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101 S. Mechie, *The Church and Scottish Social Development 1780-1870* (London,1960), p.123.

102 Ibid., pp.123-124. See also W.G. Blaikie, *Better Days for Working People* (London,1867); W.G. Blaikie, *The Dwellings of the People* (Edinburgh,1851); W.G. Blaikie, *Recollections of a Busy Life--An Autobiography* (London,1901); W.G. Blaikie, *Hearts and Hands in the World of Labour* (London,1865); W.G. Blaikie, *The Future of the Working Classes: God or Mammon* (Edinburgh,1872).

103 T. Smith, *Memoirs of James Begg,* vol. ii, p.144. The eight points were: 1. Improved and extended education. 2. Suppression of drunkenness. 3. Better working-class housing. 4. Public washing houses and bleaching greens. 5. Reform of land laws. 6. Simplified system of transfer of land. 7. Treatment of crime and pauperism. 8. Greater justice in Parliament for Scotland.

104 S. Mechie, *The Church and Scottish Social Development 1780-1870*, p.125.

105 Ibid.

106 Ibid., pp.125-126.

1858, the Free Church General Assembly appointed a Committee on the State of Working Class Housing with Begg as its convener. The Committee was initially preoccupied with rural housing, but gradually it concentrated on improving working-class housing in the large towns and cities. In 1862, responding to the collapse of a tenement in the High Street in Edinburgh which resulted in twenty-nine fatalities, Begg criticised the selfishness of capitalists.[107]

While one historian has viewed it as "particularly regrettable" that Begg felt the working class could provide housing for themselves, it is hard to see that there was any alternative.[108] While Begg was campaigning for improved working-class housing in the 1850s and 1860s, Glasgow's Town Council, the most forward thinking local authority in Scotland, had only just embarked upon a tentative policy of State intervention to provide clean water. It was not until 1867 that the Town Council took a further step towards public ownership with the municipalisation of gas. The idea of any Town Council intervening to build improved housing would have been looked upon as revolutionary.[109] Moreover, although Begg's scheme would have appealed mostly to the labour aristocracy, it was a plan which owed much to Chalmers' thinking. Just as Chalmers hoped to produce independent, self-reliant Christians through a church organisation, Begg's aim was to make each worker an independent home owner through the collective action of the working class. This was one of the reasons why Begg, in 1867, dismissed a group of philanthropists in Glasgow who wanted to build houses for the working class.[110] Whatever Begg's faults he realised that such a plan would leave the working class dependent on others for improved housing. Begg's plan would also have removed the much demonised

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107 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1862) pp.187-198 and Appendix xv.

108 S. Mechie, *The Church and Scottish Social Development 1780-1870,* p.133.

109 Begg did in fact feel that houses could be built from the public purse in 1849. Perhaps the lack of response when he first suggested it, encouraged Begg to feel that State built housing was not practical. See J. Begg, *Pauperism and the Poor Laws* (Edinburgh,1849), p.27.

110 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1867) Appendix xxv pp.5-6.

landlord. If any criticism can be levelled at Begg, it was his recommendation to dissolve the Committee in 1867 on the grounds that public opinion was now alive on the subject. Indeed it was, but that did not justify the Free Church withdrawing from the movement.

The problem as far as the Free Church was concerned with intervening in social issues was expressed in an overture to the General Assembly in 1864 on the question of social economy. In supporting the overture, William Blaikie said that while the Church had a responsibility to intervene in social issues, there was a danger of the Church becoming embroiled in essentially secular debates. As we have seen, Blaikie had also been concerned about the state of working-class housing in Scotland. Nevertheless, he felt that Begg's campaign had crossed the boundary into issues which were secular (particularly in his proposal to petition Parliament to compel the sale of land). This overture reflected widespread feeling within the Free Church that Begg was becoming too radical. Instead of criticising Begg for not going far enough, he should be applauded for what he achieved.[111]

As we have seen, those ministers who argued for government intervention regarded such action as complementary to the Churches' evangelical programmes. Just as the Free Church found it difficult to determine precisely where it had a legitimate interest in social and economic affairs, so it was difficult for either local or central government to know when to stop once it had embarked upon a policy of intervention. As we will see, the tension between Churches which regarded themselves as dominant forces in society and an increasingly powerful State beginning to assert its control over social and economic life would have enormous implications for the Churches' social authority and missionary programmes for the rest of the century.

Although the Home Mission Committee sought to stimulate missionary work throughout the country, certain towns did not feel that they benefited from

111 Ibid., (1864) pp.324-325.

the Committee's work. The Free Presbytery of Paisley, which had cooperated with the Presbytery of Dundee in encouraging the amalgamation of the Home Mission and Glasgow Evangelization Committees in 1858, still felt aggrieved in the mid-1860s about how it had been treated by the Committee. The Free Presbytery of Paisley sent an overture to the General Assembly in 1865, asking the Home Mission Committee to consider how it could encourage those congregations which wanted to undertake territorial work.[112] The population of Paisley had been almost stationary for thirty years, with many Paisley inhabitants leaving for Glasgow, but the Presbytery of Paisley estimated that 15,000 of Paisley's 50,000 residents never went to church.[113] While a number of Free Church congregations had tried to evangelise those outwith the church in the town, the presbytery felt that they had been hindered by lack of support from the Home Mission Committee. The Presbytery of Paisley may have had a point, but their overture failed to convince either the General Assembly or the Home Mission Committee.

One of the problems which faced towns like Paisley was that the Home Mission Committee since 1853 had been diverted from its missionary work, and became increasingly burdened with the responsibility of providing stipends for ordained ministers at sanctioned charges. The Free Church General Assembly in 1853 brought an end to the connection which had existed between the Sustentation Fund and church extension. Previously, all church-extension charges had been able to benefit from the Sustentation Fund. This meant, in many cases, that they were subsidised by wealthier congregations.[114] However, the General Assembly changed the nature of the rules in 1853 and sanctioned a separate fund to support ministers at church-extension charges. But then, in 1854 and 1855, absolutely nothing was done to constitute the fund, largely because of

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112 Ibid., (1865) pp.84-85.

113 Ibid.

114 Ibid., (1862) Appendix xvi.

the Free Church's precarious financial position.[115] This led to the adoption of the Home Mission Committee's minute on 22 January 1856 in relation to the Crosshill station. According to this minute, if the Crosshill station was sanctioned, the Committee promised to give the station a grant worth £30 a year for three years, after which the £30 grant would decline by £5 a year.[116] When the Crosshill station was sanctioned it not only received the Committee's grant, but it formed a precedent for other church-extension charges. This policy appeared expedient at the time if the work of church extension was to continue, but it soon became an overwhelming burden upon the Home Mission Committee. Church-extension charges were no longer mission stations, but were now established sanctioned congregations. As the number of these church-extension charges increased, the money available for aggressive territorial home-mission work would inevitably decline. In 1861, twenty-two of the forty-eight church-extension charges were being supported financially according to the 1856 minute. Between 1860 and 1861, these church-extension charges drained the Home Mission Committee's finances by £1,208.[117]

The Presbytery of Paisley remained determined to persuade the Home Mission Committee that its needs were as important as those of the large cities. It sent an overture to the Home Mission Committee in 1868 asking it to consider again how it might provide grants to encourage territorial missionary work in those areas where the erection of a new charge was not contemplated at the outset of the work.[118] The Presbytery of Paisley certainly had a case. Since 1860, only three congregations in the town had received grants from the Home Mission Committee, and only one of those congregations had continued to receive a grant after the Assembly in 1864. This time, however, the Home Mission Committee was willing to look at the question of towns like Paisley. On

115 Ibid., p.11.
116 Ibid.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid., (1868) Appendix xxxiii p.1.

21 January 1868, the Home Mission Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to consider first, how to provide ordinances to Free Church adherents who did not have access to an ordained ministry, and secondly, how to carry the Gospel to those outwith the Church. After investigating the matter, the Sub-Committee concluded that Free Church adherents in rural areas without access to an ordained ministry had been well provided for by mission stations under the oversight of a probationer. Furthermore, the Sub-Committee determined that genuinely aggressive missionary work had been stimulated by giving grants to those who were looking to establish a new charge. The Sub-Committee felt that the Committee should (as a general rule) refuse grants unless the creation of a church was the ultimate aim of those who wanted to undertake a mission. It also recognised that there were certain areas in the country where there were insufficient Free Church adherents to establish a church. The Sub-Committee, however, argued that the local inhabitants in such areas could be evangelised successfully through the territorial system. In order to provide for those areas, the Sub-Committee recommended that the Home Mission Committee establish an entirely new class of stations called congregational missions. Accepting the Sub-Committee's findings, the Home Mission Committee agreed to provide grants of no more than £20 to individual missionaries employed at congregational missions. The local presbytery would have to map out a territory for the missionary to oversee. Regular visiting among the local families would also be a condition of the missionary's employment. However, it was stipulated that no more than £500 of the Home Mission Committee's income would be spent annually on this type of work when the Free Church General Assembly approved the plan in May 1868.[119]

Although this scheme appeared to be designed to take the territorial method to smaller towns such as Paisley, it was clear that others saw it as fulfilling a very different role. William Wilson, the Home Mission Committee's

119 Ibid., Appendix xviii pp.1-2.

convener, felt that there were a number of towns, such as Paisley, where it would be more economical to establish a congregational mission under the oversight of a missionary, with members to be 'creamed off' for an existing church in the area, rather than to establish an independent congregation.[120] Although Wilson stressed that the Committee would continue to encourage Chalmers' territorial ideal where suitable, he argued that the Committee could not afford to overlook the new plan.[121] Wilson's definition of a congregational mission, however, threatened to undermine Chalmers' territorial plan. Chalmers' ultimate aim for the territorial system had been to establish independent, working-class congregations where middle-class involvement - if necessary - would be restricted to helping congregations get off the ground. This new plan left working-class preaching stations entirely dependent on the patronage of middle-class congregations and it involved the patronising belief that it was possible to tell when people were ready to enter a proper church. Wilson's vision of congregational missions also reflected tensions within the Free Church as to where the denomination's future lay. If the missions were to provide for existing Free Church adherents in areas where it would not be economically viable to establish a charge, then they could hardly be described as missionary. Instead, the plan seemed a triumph for those who had ceased to see the Free Church as a national Church, but rather as a gathered Church of true believers. The decade had begun on an optimistic note, but the future of territorialism seemed uncertain as the 1860s drew to a close.

Conclusion

The period between 1858 and 1868 proved a dramatic one for the Scottish Churches and particularly for the Free Church. In the summer of 1859 signs of a revival, the first to appear during the Free Church's short lifetime, emerged in

120 Ibid., p.132.

121 Ibid., pp.131-132.

the east of the country. Initially, the revival brought great hope of regenerating Scottish society in a way that conventional missionary programmes had as yet failed to achieve. Similarly, it was hoped that the revival could strengthen the role of territorialism and that together they would restore the Christian commonwealth. Enthusiasm for the revival began to wane in Scotland in the first half of 1862. The revival had shown the Scottish Churches how a spiritual awakening could grip the nation, and it had brought an unprecedented level of cooperation among the Presbyterian denominations. In this prevailing mood of harmony, the Free Church entered into union negotiations with the United Presbyterian Church in 1863. While these talks failed in the short-term to achieve union, largely due to a well organised, Highland-based minority within the Free Church, the revival had shown the Scottish Churches just how much they had in common. Consequently, discussions over Presbyterian reunion dominated relations between the Scottish Churches for the rest of the century.

The revival between 1859 and 1862 also had important ramifications for territorialism. The success enjoyed by territorial congregations and those sanctioned charges which had started out as territorial missions during the revival was one of the main reasons why the Free Church was so pleased with the spiritual awakening. The Free Church tended to regard the success of territorial congregations during the revival as God's reward to them for their previous work in the mission field. It is also worth noting that large organised meetings in halls were not a particularly prominent feature of the revival, compared to the way they would be used during the Moody and Sankey revival between 1873 and 1874. Instead, the focus of the 1859-1962 revival was on individual ministers and their churches, which became centres of spiritual influence within their local communities: and was this not precisely what the supporters of the territorial system had always advocated? Free Church leaders, therefore, hoped that the success of territorial congregations during the revival

would encourage the rapid spread of such operations.

The positive benefits of the revival were not restricted to one denomination. After the Disruption, the Church of Scotland had been devastated by the loss of so many of its ministers and members to the Free Church. In this environment it was hardly surprising that the Established Church was not particularly aggressive in terms of mission work. In the 1850s, however, the Church of Scotland emerged as a more disciplined and cohesive body. The Church of Scotland's rehabilitation was encouraged in 1849 when the House of Lords decided that the *quoad sacra* churches belonged to the Established Church and demanded that the Free Church return those *quoad sacra* churches it still occupied. In many cases it was questionable whether the Established Church had sufficient members to fill the *quoad sacra* churches, but the legal decision had at least provided the Church of Scotland with some relief from the mood of despondency which surrounded it in the 1840s. Further, the Church of Scotland was beginning to realise that the Free Church had the potential to usurp its role as the national Church of Scotland. If the Church of Scotland was to confront the Free Church's challenge, it had to reassert its influence over the lives of people throughout the country. While the Church of Scotland set out to reassert its Establishment tradition, the Free Church was increasingly moving away from regarding itself as a national Church.

Although the Free Church had hoped that the revival would heighten interest in territorialism, divisions within the Free Church over whether the denomination was a national Church or a gathered Church of true believers had a number of important ramifications for territorialism. As long as the Free Church regarded itself as a national Church then territorialism made practical sense. After all, a national Church had a responsibility not only to provide religious and moral instruction together with spiritual ordinances to its own members, but also to endeavour to reach those outwith organised religion: and

there was, it seemed, no better way to achieve these goals than by the territorial method. In the 1860s, as we will see, a large section of the Free Church declared their support for disestablishment which, in theory at least, meant that they no longer regarded the Free Church as an alternative Established Church. If the Free Church felt that it only had a responsibility to place ordinances before its own members and adherents, then the future for aggressive territorialism looked decidedly bleak. Further, when the Free Church adopted the congregational mission plan in 1868, it appeared to challenge the dominance of territorialism. Congregational missions were intended to provide for those areas where Free Church adherents could not afford to support a sanctioned charge. They may well have been given the title of congregational *missions*, but it was a description which was hardly appropriate.

The next chapter will discuss the tensions between those who regarded the Free Church as a gathered Church and those who still felt that it was a national Church. The next chapter will also explore the rise of congregational missions at the expense of the territorial system, even though it was by no means clear whether they were of any particular value in the mission field. However, while these two issues were of great importance to the Free Church in the 1870s, the home-mission environment was dominated by the revival between 1873 and 1874. Few ministers in 1862 would have predicted that another spiritual awakening, only more intense, would grip the country within such a short space of time. Like the revival in the early 1860s, the spiritual awakening during 1873 and 1874 owed an enormous debt to America. This was not because that was where the revival first emerged, but because it was two Americans, Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey, who dominated the revival in Scotland. Although the two Americans were only in the country for ten months, their influence upon Scottish Churches and the Free Church in particular, proved to be immense.

CHAPTER FIVE

REVIVALISM AND THE HOME-MISSION MOVEMENT, 1868-1878

Given the disappointment which followed the publication of the Religious Census of Worship and Education in 1851, it was not surprising that the Churches did not want another census in 1861. By 1870, however, the large Presbyterian Churches in Scotland had decided that the time was right to hold another, improved inquiry.[1] Despite pressure from Churches the government refused to conduct another census. This refusal was largely a response to opposition from the Church of England. Further, the Home Secretary was unwilling to introduce a 'no religion' column which had been proposed by Dissenters.[2] Having been refused a second official inquiry, some of the Churches held their own private and often biased investigations into non-churchgoing. In addition to the question of non-churchgoing, the Free Church looked into the subject of lapsing - which in many ways was a problem worthy of separate consideration.

The Committee on the State of Religion and Morals told the General Assembly in 1870 that the Presbytery of Edinburgh had held two Conferences on the subject of lapsing.[3] The presbytery's investigation discovered that there was a trend in the city towards people attending church only once on Sundays.[4] This was a worrying tendency given that many people had previously been in the habit of attending church twice, and even three times on the sabbath. The inquiry also revealed that young people in the capital were increasingly reluctant

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1 D.J. Withrington, 'The Churches in Scotland, c. 1870-c.1900: Towards a New Social Conscience?', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xix (1977), p.157.

2 Ibid.

3 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1870) Appendix xx p.10.

4 Ibid.

to become members of the Church.[5] Similarly, the presbytery's investigation discovered that children from middle and upper-class families in Edinburgh were frequently unwilling to help out in the work of the Church.[6] These trends among the young were particularly alarming given that they represented the Free Church's future members, elders and deacons. The presbytery also found much to be concerned with when it looked at the subject of territorial missions. The presbytery's report concluded that territorial missions had succeeded in attracting many of the lapsed and many working-class people into the church, but it felt that they had failed to make any real impression upon those at the bottom of the social scale.[7] This was hardly a revelation, but it did provide another indication that territorialism was most successful among the better paid, respectable, working class.

After investigating the problem of the lapsed in some depth, the Home Mission Committee presented a report on "Retaining our Members" to the Assembly in 1871.[8] The report concluded that it was those individuals who left an area where they had a number of social networks, including a connection with a congregation, and moved into a district where they were unknown, who were most likely to stop attending church. To cater for this section of the population, the Committee recommended that a member should apply for a membership certificate when they left a congregation. After the individuals had arrived at their new home they were to give the certificate to their nearest Free Church minister. If a member left a congregation without such a certificate, the minister and elders were to find out the person's new address and forward it to them.[9] The problem with plans like these was that they placed a large amount of responsibility upon individual members. It is quite possible that a number of

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5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid., (1871) Appendix iii a p.1.
9 Ibid., p.2.

people in rural areas may only have attended church because of social pressure in an environment where non-attendance would have been easily identified. When such individuals moved into the more anonymous environment of towns and cities, they may well have welcomed the opportunity it presented to stop attending church and blend into an environment where they were unknown. As a result, the plans which the Free Church adopted to prevent lapsing (like the membership certificate) proved only of limited value. Indeed, the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals asked the Assembly in 1878 to investigate whether more could not be done for those who left rural areas to live in towns.[10] Just as nothing could be done to prevent the population drift towards the large cities, there was seemingly nothing that could be done to prevent lapsing.

The question of lapsing and non-churchgoing had been ongoing subjects of concern for the Churches, but they were not the only issues which aroused heated debate in the early 1870s. In many ways this period was reminiscent of the 1840s with similar concerns over poor relief, drunkenness, crime; educational provision and non-churchgoing. This not only suggested that anxiety over many of these issues may have been cyclical, but it showed that none of these social problems had been addressed adequately despite lengthy debate and analysis.

The Free Church minister, James Begg, who had spent more time than most studying Scotland's social and religious deprivation, felt the country's difficulties were aggravated by the lack of attention which the English dominated Parliament gave to Scottish issues.[11] While Irish or English Dissenting MPs could frequently make or break a government and thus force Parliament to address their concerns, Scottish MPs, with their unwavering devotion to the Liberal party, were unable to wield the same influence at Westminster. As a consequence, Scottish matters had remained the responsibility of the already

[10] Ibid., (1878) Appendix xx p.6.

[11] J. Begg, *The Ecclesiastical and Social Evils of Scotland and How to Remedy Them* (Edinburgh,1871).

overburdened Lord Advocate, to the detriment of real solutions to a number of pressing social problems. Given this state of affairs it was hardly surprising that Begg responded with incredulity when Prime Minister Gladstone had claimed during his premiership in the early 1870s that Parliament should be relieved from many of its responsibilities. Instead of withdrawing from a number of areas of policy-making, Begg argued that Parliament would have to intervene in society on an unprecedented level if Scotland's problems were to be addressed.[12]

In language which reflected fears in Britain regarding the Paris Commune of 1871, Begg described the Poor Law Act of 1845 as "the purest communism."[13] During the heated debates of the 1830s and 1840s Begg had opposed any proposal for an assessed poor relief. Unlike others, however, he never warmed to the system even after it had been established for a quarter of a century. Instead, Begg regarded the growing number of poor-relief recipients and the subsequently greater expenditure on the poor as symbolic of Scotland's "national decay."[14] Begg was a long standing opponent of the Poor Law Act of 1845, but by the late 1860s he was joined by a large number of people who had become despondent over how the Act seemed to have made such a negligible impact upon those it was designed to help. This mounting anxiety over poor relief led to the appointment of a Select Committee on Scottish Poor Laws in 1869 to investigate the effectiveness of the Poor Law Act of 1845. Instead of throwing good money after bad, Begg argued that: "What is really wanted in Scotland is a THIRD REFORMATION, avoiding the errors and combining all the advantages of the previous two."[15] Begg had a deep personal interest in trying to stimulate debate over poor relief, but it was the question of non-churchgoing which preoccupied most ministers.

On 13 December 1871, John Pirie, the minister at the Free Cowgate church,

12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., p.5.
14 Ibid., p.7.
15 Ibid., p.34.

told the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh that approximately 60,000 people in the capital's population of 242,000 had lapsed from church attendance.[16] Pirie insisted that home-mission work still had the same sense of urgency which it had twenty or thirty years previously. Indeed, Pirie argued that: "What we have done is only a mere scratch on the outside of the citadel of our home heathenism, a mere drop in the bucket,..."[17] Like a number of his colleagues, Pirie was increasingly drawn towards socioeconomic conclusions to explain why such large sections of the community had stopped attending church, or indeed, had never developed the habit of attending church. In particular, Pirie pointed to the census in 1861 which had revealed that 13,209 families in the city, approximately 60,000 people, lived in houses of only one room.[18] Sharing Begg's moral outrage at those who could see nothing wrong with the existing social fabric, Pirie asked his colleagues in the presbytery: "Did it ever occur to you to inquire how decency, virtue, morality - not to speak of anything approaching religious sensibility - could live, far less thrive, in a soil so unpropitious, and where the influences are so adverse and antagonistic?"[19]

Although Pirie recognised the problems which arose from inadequate housing, he regarded intemperance as the greatest single cause of non-churchgoing.[20] When Pirie undertook his investigation in 1868, Edinburgh could boast 800 licensed shops. This gave the city a ratio of one shop for every 200 people, and one for every thirty families.[21] To make matters worse, 40% of these licensed shops were concentrated in the city's Old Town working-class district, which Pirie claimed was responsible for 60% of the city's crime.[22] Pirie did welcome the development of new residential areas for the working-class elite in

16 J. Pirie, *The Lapsed: with Suggestions as to the Best Means of Raising them, A Paper Read at a Conference of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, December 13, 1871*, (Edinburgh,1871), p.4.
17 Ibid., p.6.
18 Ibid., p.9.
19 Ibid., pp.9-10.
20 Ibid., p.14.
21 Ibid., p.15.
22 Ibid., p.17.

Roseburn, West Fountainbridge and the Dumbiedykes.[23] Unfortunately, however, the development of these areas served to separate the labour aristocracy from the lowest class, leaving the latter concentrated in decaying Old Town slums. Pirie praised City Improvement schemes which were demolishing some of the worst structures in the Old Town, but he felt that: "as an instrument for overtaking the reclamation of the lapsed masses, I have the *most perfect faith in that particular form of missionary organisation known as Dr. Chalmers' Territorial Scheme, when honestly and fully wrought out.*"[24] As minister of a charge which had started out as a territorial mission, Pirie's confidence in Chalmers' system was perhaps not surprising. Pirie also recognised that the existing moral climate was an excellent one in which to reassert the territorial method.

Begg and Pirie reflected the anxiety in Edinburgh over what was widely regarded as the capital's social and moral degradation. Such fears were also mirrored in Glasgow, where concern had risen following the report in 1870 (accurate or otherwise), that 130,000 nominal Protestants in the city did not attend church. The Reverend James Johnston of the Free St. James church was responsible for this statistic.[25] When Johnston undertook his investigation in 1868, Glasgow's population had grown to 516,000. Johnston had calculated that there were 100,000 Roman Catholics in the city, which left 416,000 nominal Protestants. The 196 churches in the city each had an average capacity of 820 and could therefore hold 160,720 people. This was a slightly better ratio than the 179 churches at one for every 779.6 people in Glasgow which had existed in 1851.[26] In his day, Thomas Chalmers had argued that five-eighths of the city's inhabitants should be churchgoers. If this figure was applied in 1868, it meant that 260,000 of the city's 416,000 nominal Protestants should have been

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23 Ibid., p.13.

24 Ibid., p.21.

25 J. Johnston, *Religious Destitution in Glasgow* (Glasgow,1870), p.9.

26 Ibid., pp.13-15.

churchgoers. Johnston was less optimistic than Chalmers. He estimated that 50% - or 208,000 Protestants - should have been able to attend church. But Johnston's investigation revealed that only 128,000 Protestants attended church, which meant that there were 79,000 Protestants who did not attend church.[27]

To Johnston, the problem was not helped by the unequal distribution of churches in the city. In 1868, Johnston had calculated that there were 157,000 people in the east end of Glasgow, including Springburn. To provide for the religious needs of this section of the community there were only forty-five Protestant churches, or a ratio of one for every 3,488 people.[28] The 359,000 residents elsewhere in the city, however, had 148 churches, or a ratio of one for every 2,400 people.[29] This was a significantly better provision than that available to the working class in the east end of the city. Statistics like Johnston's could never be entirely accurate, but they showed that the Protestant Churches were still failing to provide for an area which had been the subject of concern since Thomas Chalmers' time at the Tron in 1815.

Having given people time to digest his findings, Johnston published *The Rising Tide of Irreligion, Pauperism, Immorality and Death in Glasgow and How to Turn It,* in 1871.[30] In this pamphlet Johnston revealed his solutions to the social problems which plagued Glasgow. Like many of his fellow ministers Johnston had been shocked by the findings of the census in 1861 which had revealed that 28,000 of 62,000 homes in the city consisted of nothing more than a single room. Johnston felt the census had proved that: "The Troglodytes of Africa were better housed than thousands of the inhabitants of Glasgow."[31] Similarly, Johnston had been distressed by the fact that £113,656 had been spent on legal poor relief in looking after 50,910 individuals in Glasgow during 1868.

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27 Ibid., pp.18-19.

28 Ibid., pp.23-24.

29 Ibid., p.24.

30 J. Johnston, *The Rising Tide of Irreligion, Pauperism, Immorality and Death in Glasgow and How to Turn It* (Glasgow,1871).

31 Ibid., p.7.

This last figure did not include all those who depended upon charity. Johnston, in fact, estimated that the total cost of providing for the poor in the city during 1868 was in excess of £200,000.[32] To tackle the social problems which confronted the city, Johnston called for an alliance between magistrates, Churches and medical faculty.[33] Like many Evangelicals, Johnston had no doubt that any movement of social reform would fail if the Gospel were excluded.[34]

Although Johnston's plan would give the Churches an enormous say in the decision making process in Glasgow, he reluctantly acknowledged that a number of the Churches' missionary schemes had failed to meet the needs of the city's destitute population. This did not mean the death knell for the territorial system. Instead, it was large meetings in halls and other schemes which were not connected to a church which received the full brunt of Johnston's opprobrium.[35] To replace these, Johnston proposed a return to the parochial system as advocated by Knox and Chalmers. Like a number of his predecessors, Johnston felt there would have to be a large increase in the number of parishes if the city's inhabitants were to be evangelised successfully. According to Johnston, in 1868, the Church of Scotland's forty-eight parish districts in the city contained 416,000 nominal Protestants. This gave each parish an unwieldy average of 8,066 nominal Protestants. But this figure rose to 10,750 when the city's Roman Catholic community were included. After the Disruption, the Free Church did not adopt the parish unit of administration, but Johnston had calculated that each of the Free Church's fifty-three congregations in the city was surrounded by an average of 7,850 nominal Protestants in its neighbouring district. This was slightly better than the Established Church could boast, but a figure which rose to 9,549 when the city's Roman Catholics were included.[36] Although one historian

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32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., p.21.
34 Ibid., pp.22-23.
35 Ibid., pp.38-39.
36 Ibid.

has argued that the Churches understood by the 1870s that the problem of non-churchgoing could no longer be blamed on a lack of churches, this argument would have been lost upon Johnston.[37] In fact, his solution to the problem in the breakdown in the supply of churches was to build an additional thirty-six churches. By this plan, the Free, United Presbyterian and Established Churches would each build twelve new churches in the city's most destitute districts. Johnston had calculated that this would then give the city a ratio of one church for every 2,000 people.[38] With each church costing £3,000 it was clear that Johnston's plan would be expensive, but he felt that each of the denominations was capable of raising between £30,000-£35,000.[39] Furthermore, Johnston felt that several Protestant Churches should set up an administrative board to look into the possibility of greater cooperation in their home-mission work.[40] Johnston was also highly critical in his pamphlet of a number of evangelistic plans which had failed to make any inroads upon the country's lapsed.

If any missionary scheme had produced negligible results for the outlay involved it was the Free Church's plan for congregational missions. Existing churches may well have undertaken a congregational mission with the best of intentions, but their interest seldom lasted long. Therefore, most missionaries at congregational missions were left to their own devices amidst some appalling scenes of social degradation and religious indifference. As a result, most congregational missions ended up as ragged stations. Considering congregational missions were costing the Home Mission Committee £1,000 a year in 1870, the entire scheme was simply a waste of the Committee's precious resources.[41]

The original intention of the congregational mission plan was to provide

37 D.J. Withrington, 'The Churches in Scotland, c.1870-c.1900: Towards a New Social Conscience?', p.155.

38 J. Johnston, *The Rising Tide of Irreligion, Pauperism, Immorality and Death,* p.45.

39 Ibid., p.52.

40 Ibid., p.48.

41 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1870) Appendix iii p.4. See also J. Gall, *Congregational Work, an address by James Gall at a meeting of the Free New North Congregational Mission 16 December 1875* (Edinburgh,1875).

for rural areas where there were not enough Free Church adherents to support a sanctioned self-supporting charge or in cities where the existing Free church was crowded. By the early 1870s, however, it was clear that there were other areas which deserved the Free Church's attention. The Presbytery of Linlithgow submitted an overture to the Assembly in 1872 which urged the Free Church to make a concentrated missionary effort in the country's mining districts.[42] Mining had become one of the most important sectors of the Scottish economy in the previous fifty years, and a large number of mining villages and towns had emerged throughout the country in areas which had previously been rural. Unfortunately, the Churches had been unprepared for this development and so none of the large Presbyterian Churches was well represented in the mining districts. In a number of mining areas the local inhabitants often had to make do with a struggling preaching station.[43]

This situation was distressing given that mining areas often fed population into large towns and cities, and the coal they produced was vital to the wellbeing of the Scottish economy. Thus, it was a matter of concern that half of the country's 300,000 miners were estimated to be outwith the church, even more so considering that three-quarters of them were estimated to be lapsed Protestants.[44] Although many people felt that the miners would respond to a programme of evangelization, Sheriff Campbell regarded them as "the most dissipated, riotous class in the community."[45] This reflected the concerns which were directed towards the miners whose tough working environment and hard drinking, violent culture was alien to many people elsewhere in the country. However, John Henderson of Coatbridge urged the Assembly to "observe that, while practical infidelity largely prevails among miners and iron-workers,

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42 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1872) p.118.
43 Ibid., p.119.
44 Ibid., (1873) p.200.
45 Ibid., p.211.

theoretical infidelity has little hold of them."[46] The Assembly in 1873 approved the Home Mission Committee's plan to raise £30,000 which would be spent on evangelising those in mining districts. The Free Church in Glasgow was given responsibility for raising £20,000 which was to be spent in the west of the country, and the Free Church in Edinburgh was charged with raising £10,000 which would be spent in mining districts in the east of the country.[47] This programme was commendable, but it was unfortunate that the Free Church had previously shown so little interest in the mining areas. If the Free Church (and other Churches for that matter) had not been so preoccupied with the needs of large towns and cities, a missionary programme to the miners could have been undertaken much earlier.

The debate over the introduction of a national education system was another important factor in the sense of alarm which existed in Scotland concerning the country's social and moral welfare in the early 1870s. The creation of the Free Church in 1843 had led to a much needed expansion of the country's educational facilities, but even this dramatic expansion could not disguise the fact that Scotland required a compulsory, national system of education.[48] The Lord Advocate did introduce a number of education Bills into Parliament between 1850-1870, but they were continually defeated although they often had the support of a majority of Scottish MPs. English Dissenting MPs had been reluctant to pass an education Bill for Scotland if it looked like this would set a precedent for England by extending the Established Anglican Church's control over education. Similarly, the Free and United Presbyterian Churches opposed any measure which involved spending public money in expanding popular

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46 Ibid., p.209.

47 Ibid., p.212.

48 See R.D. Anderson, *Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland* (Oxford,1983); R.D. Anderson, *Education and the Scottish People 1750-1918* (Oxford,1995); H. Corr 'An Exploration into Scottish Education', in W.H. Fraser and R.J. Morris (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland vol ii 1830-1914* (Edinburgh,1990), pp.290-309; J. Scotland, *The History of Scottish Education* (London,1969); D.J. Withrington, 'Schooling, Literacy and Society', in T.M. Devine and R. Mitchison (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland vol i 1760-1830* (Edinburgh,1988), pp.163-188.

education under the direction of the Church of Scotland.[49] In the event, Scotland had to wait until England received its own Education Act in 1870 before an equivalent measure was passed for Scotland in 1872.

The fact that the teaching of religious education was not safeguarded until the last stages of the Bill's passage through Parliament reflected the volatile state of the religious environment in Scotland in the early 1870s. It would have been unthinkable for a national Education Act to have been passed fifty years previously which gave such a tenuous safeguard to the provision of religious education. It required a last minute amendment in 1872, however, to ensure that the teaching of religious education would be regulated by the principle of "use and wont." Whereas the Bible had once been a core text book in Scottish schools, the Act stipulated that it could only be taught at the beginning, and or, at the end of the school day. Moreover, those parents who objected could withdraw their children from religious education classes. This was hardly satisfactory, but the Churches were forced to accept the Bill in 1872 if only through fear that its failure would lead to an entirely secular measure. Those who feared that secularists would dominate the new system quickly mobilised themselves and gained control of the elected school boards which ran the local schools. As a result, most schools continued to offer a Protestant form of religious education. In the short-term the battle had been won. But those who felt that education and religion were inseparable could not be entirely confident about what the future might hold.

The government's Education Act had other important implications for the Churches. Since the Reformation the Churches had used schools to encourage religious belief and acceptable social behaviour. Having lost their overall control over education, the success of the Churches' evangelistic programmes became even more important if they were to retain a hold over the Scottish people. The

49 See D.J. Withrington, 'Adrift Among the Reefs of Conflicting Ideals? Education and the Free Church 1843-1855', in S.J. Brown and M. Fry (eds.), *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption* (Edinburgh,1993), pp.79-88.

Act also had important ramifications for territorialism. Since Thomas Chalmers' time, every successful territorial operation had a range of educational facilities which placed them at the heart of their local community. Now that the State had taken over responsibility for schooling, territorial churches would have a greatly reduced educational role which would in turn diminish their social impact. There was, however, also a positive aspect to the Education Act of 1872. Since 1843, a large percentage of the Free Church's annual expenditure had been spent on education to the detriment of a number of other worthwhile schemes. If nothing else the Education Act relieved the Free Church from this onerous financial burden. After 1872, the way was open for the Free Church to spend the money which had been previously earmarked for education on a more extensive home-mission programme.

The late 1860s and early 1870s were unquestionably years of enormous anxiety concerning the country's moral and social condition. At no stage since the early 1840s had the Churches been as concerned about moral decline as they were in the early 1870s. In the 1840s, Irish Catholic immigration, urbanisation, drunkenness and Chartism had occupied the minds of social commentators in Britain. In the early 1870s, it was clear that many of the social problems linked to urbanisation had still not been properly addressed. The number of people receiving poor relief had increased along with the cost of providing poor relief. In 1868, it was revealed that forty-two people in every 1,000 in Scotland were paupers. This represented the highest point of pauperism in Scotland.[50] Instead of accepting such an increase as a necessary consequence of providing the poorest members of society with a safety net, many people felt that it was a consequence of moral decay. The Churches were also concerned about whether their missionary programmes had managed to prevent non-churchgoing. Similarly, members of the established order in Britain in the early 1870s were not oblivious to the communist rising in Paris in 1871, and the violence and bloodshed which

50 R.H. Campbell, *Scotland since 1707: The Rise of an Industrial Society* (Oxford,1965), p.234

followed. Historians have discussed whether the revolution was truly proletarian, but in the early 1870s people were worried that the large, non-churchgoing, urban, discontented poor in Britain might also resort to such extreme measures. The mood of despondency which pervaded the Churches in this period was also a legacy of the revival between 1859-1862 which had failed to regenerate Scottish society in a way which many ministers had hoped it would. In such an atmosphere, it was perhaps not surprising that ministers should begin looking for something familiar. Therefore, once again, the Free Church turned towards Chalmers' tried and trusted territorial method as the solution to the country's problems. While many ministers set out to prove the thoroughness of the territorial system, a number of their colleagues prayed. They prayed not only that Scotland would be saved from the moral abyss, but that there would be another spiritual awakening such as that between 1859-1862. Few could have expected that their prayers would be answered so quickly.

As we have seen, the revival in Scotland between 1859-1862 laid strong foundations for the success of the American evangelists, Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey, in Scotland in 1873. It was fortunate that Moody and Sankey's visit to Scotland came so soon after the revival between 1859-1862, as the spiritual forces which had been unleashed upon the country during that period had still not been dissipated by the 1870s. The Committee on the State of Religion and Morals told the General Assembly in 1871 that forty-five of fifty-one kirk-sessions in the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr could still feel the results of the previous revival within their congregations.[51] This meant when Moody and Sankey began their work in Scotland that they were dealing with a population which was already familiar with the nature of a revival, and a large number of them were evidently still showing signs of a spiritual awakening.

Although it was largely their success in Scotland which made Moody and

51 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1871) Appendix xx pp.26-27.

Sankey's reputations as evangelists, it was not their first port of call when they arrived in Britain. When Moody and Sankey landed at Liverpool on 17 June 1873 they were practically unknown as evangelists and could not have predicted the success which was soon to accompany their efforts.[52] This success did not appear overnight, however, as initially the people of England did not respond to their American-style evangelism. The meetings which they held at York served merely as a showcase for their methods of operating rather than promoting any significant revival.[53] Moody and Sankey found people in Sunderland and Newcastle more receptive to their attempts at evangelization. Their move to the north-east of England ensured that reports of their activities were soon filtering through to ministers north of the border. One such minister was the Reverend John Kelman of the Free St. John's church in Leith. Kelman's brother lived in Sunderland and informed him about how the two evangelists had aroused religious interest in the town. Such briefings stimulated Kelman's curiosity and he paid a visit to Sunderland. Kelman was so impressed with what he encountered that he recommended to his fellow ministers that they should invite Moody and Sankey to Edinburgh.[54]

From the outset Moody and Sankey's visit to Scotland encouraged an ecumenical spirit, with all Presbyterian Churches represented on the Committee that was appointed to invite the two evangelists to Edinburgh. This was appropriate as Moody and Sankey were willing to work with all Evangelical Churches. The fact that an Organising Committee was set up before the revival had even touched Scotland distinguished the revival between 1873-1874 from previous spiritual awakenings. Although Moody had already received a similar

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52 W.J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals* (Dundee,1918), p.143. See also, W. R. Moody, *Dwight L. Moody* (New York,1930); R.W. Clark, *Moody and Sankey in Great Britain* (London,1935); J.R. Findlay, *D. L. Moody--An American Evangelist 1837-1899* (London,1969); I.A. Muirhead, 'The Revival as a Dimension of Scottish Church History', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society,* xx (1980), pp.179-196; W.G. McLoughlin, *Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham* (New York,1959).

53 W.J. Coupar, Scottish Revivals, p.143.

54 Ibid.

request from Dundee, he decided that it would be appropriate to begin in the Scottish capital. Once Moody and Sankey had agreed to visit Edinburgh, the next six weeks were spent preparing the ground for their arrival. This took the form of holding daily afternoon prayer meetings to which all ministers and other interested parties were invited. These prayer meetings generated a mood of anticipation among both the public and clergy in the city. Such gatherings also served to familiarise people with precisely the kind of prayer meetings which would be used with such success by Moody and Sankey.[55]

After weeks of waiting, Moody and Sankey finally arrived in Edinburgh on Saturday, 22 November 1873. On the following day the first meeting of their campaign was held at the Music Hall.[56] Moody was unable to attend this meeting due to ill health, but the fact that 2,000 people turned up expecting to see him showed that the preparatory work had not been in vain. Despite fragile health, Moody made his first public appearance in Scotland on Monday at an afternoon prayer meeting in the Lower Queen St. Hall. The afternoon prayer meetings, which were initially held in city churches and then, as the crowds increased, in the Free Assembly Hall, soon became the "central pivot" for the revival in Edinburgh.[57] The procedure of these meetings usually followed a similar pattern, starting with a hymn (an indication of the prominence given to music by Moody and Sankey), followed by a prayer, then another hymn: and then a passage of scripture and exposition.[58] Further, during these prayer meetings Moody encouraged audience participation by inviting people to ask questions and comment on what they had heard. Such an approach was not always successful. As William Blaikie later pointed out: "Shyness and reserve are more Scotch than American, and hence perhaps the failure."[59] During much of

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55 Ibid.

56 Ibid., p.144.

57 *The Free Church Record*, (February 2,1874) p.26.

58 Ibid.

59 W.G. Blaikie, *Recollections of a Busy Life--An Autobiography* (London,1901), p.337.

his time in Edinburgh, Moody and his family stayed at Blaikie's home. With Blaikie at such close proximity to Moody, he was in a good position to judge his qualities both as a preacher and scholar, and perhaps explain why he could exercise such a powerful hold over an audience.

> Moody's sermons were certainly not intellectual, and those who went to his meetings in hopes of hearing something original and brilliant were doomed to disappointment. They were plain, honest, somewhat blunt appeals, but wonderfully brightened and made telling by a copious supply of illustrations, anecdotes, and personal reminiscences.[60]

Blaikie's refreshingly honest account of Moody's preaching style partly explains why the evangelist initially received a warmer welcome from the public in Edinburgh than from their ministers. It appeared that a number of ministers in Edinburgh were initially hostile to the work, and remained sceptical of Moody's influence until they had encountered his success for themselves.[61] No doubt a number of ministers resented the fact that Moody and Sankey had created such a storm of enthusiasm having just arrived in the city, while they had laboured for a long time and often without reward among the same people who were suddenly so alive to the presence of two strangers. The immediate success which Moody encountered in Edinburgh was in stark contrast to the way he had been received when he first arrived in England.[62] If ministers detected something new and therefore suspicious in Moody's approach to evangelization, his preaching style appealed to the Scottish public who found it reassuring and heart warming.

> There is nothing of novelty in the doctrine which Mr Moody proclaims, it is the old gospel, old yet always fresh, and young too, as the living fountain or the morning sun in which the substitution of Christ is placed in the centre and presented with

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60 Ibid. p.334.

61 R. Peddie, *A Consecutive Narrative of the Remarkable Awakening in Edinburgh* (Edinburgh,1874), p.14.

62 J.R. Findlay, *Dwight L Moody--An American Evangelist 1837-1899*, p.151.

admirable distinctiveness...[63]

Moody understood how important it was to maintain momentum during a revival if religious groups were to build upon the progress which had been made. In Edinburgh, therefore, the work carried on relentlessly on every day of the week except Saturdays, which was surprising given that it was a half-day for most working people. Thus, in addition to Moody's afternoon prayer meetings and daily afternoon Bible Classes which ministers held in their own churches, during his first week in Edinburgh a nightly evening service was held at the Barclay church. At the start of Moody and Sankey's second week in Edinburgh, these evening services were transferred to the United Presbyterian church at Broughton Place.[64] During these evening meetings ministers delivered addresses and members of the audience who wanted to discuss what they had heard were invited to stay behind for a second meeting. By Moody's second Sunday in Edinburgh it was clear that no single church would be capable of holding all those who wanted to hear him preach. Therefore, the Barclay, Fountainbridge and Viewforth Free churches in the west of the city were opened simultaneously. Moody then visited each of them in turn so that as many people as possible could hear him preach.[65] The fact that so many of Moody's services were held in Free churches revealed how closely associated that denomination was with the revival, and a visit by Moody and Sankey to a church could do much to add to that congregation's membership. William Blaikie reported to the Assembly in 1874 that an additional eighty-one communicants had joined the congregation at the Barclay church as a consequence of the revival.[66] No doubt a number of previously sceptical ministers were placated when they discovered how beneficial the revival could be to the size of their own congregations.

The early enthusiasm which the revival generated guaranteed crowded

63 R. Peddie, *A Consecutive Narrative of the Remarkable Awakening in Edinburgh*, pp.16-17.

64 *The Free Church Record*, (March 2,1874) p.56.

65 Ibid., p.56.

66 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1874) p.17.

meetings wherever Moody and Sankey went in the city. On Wednesday, 17 December, a lengthy meeting was held at the Free Church Assembly Hall, and although the service lasted for six hours, the hall was still crowded at the end.[67] Members of the middle and upper class formed the vast majority at these meetings.[68] The relative lack of working people was probably a consequence of Moody and Sankey's preference for holding week-day afternoon meetings which working people were unable to attend. Moody recognised this problem and before Christmas he developed a plan with the Organising Committee intended to attract working-class attendance. On 23 December, Moody held special services for working people at the Free North Leith and Free St. John's churches. The programme of working-class evangelization culminated with a meeting on 28 December at the Corn Exchange in the heart of the working-class population in the Grassmarket. Although the meeting was restricted to male ticket-holders, it attracted an audience of 5,000.[69]

No matter how hard Moody and Sankey tried, they failed to reach the most sunken elements of the working class. At the Free Church General Assembly in 1874, William Blaikie, although one of Moody's closest allies and warmest supporters, complained that the revival had failed to reduce the "scandalous vice" which existed in Edinburgh.[70] This criticism was levelled at Moody and Sankey's work in other towns and cities.[71]

After Moody and Sankey had operated in Edinburgh for a few weeks, they sent a circular, signed by thirty-eight of the city's foremost ministers and laymen, throughout the country in an attempt to stimulate interest in the spiritual awakening. The circular suggested that churches throughout Scotland should set aside the week of the 4-11 January for combined prayer. The Organising

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67 R. Peddie, *A Consecutive Narrative of the Remarkable Awakening in Edinburgh*, p.31.

68 Ibid., p.45.

69 Ibid., and p.50.

70 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1874) p.18.

71 Ibid., p.78. For similar complaints by Robert Buchanan in relation to their work in Glasgow.

Committee also held a Conventicle in the city on 17 January 1874.[72] So many ministers descended upon the capital to attend this meeting that the gates to the Free Assembly Hall had to be closed.[73] Those who managed to gain entrance heard about recent developments in the city and were able to ask questions about the nature of the revival in Edinburgh. On returning home, these ministers told their congregations about events in Edinburgh, thus encouraging revivals in their own churches and districts.

As a city Edinburgh had generally played a small role in the previous Scottish revivals. It has been argued, however, that the Moody and Sankey revival made the city the religious capital of the country in a way which it had not been since the Reformation and Covenanting periods.[74] Certainly not since the Disruption had religious events in the capital captivated the imagination of the entire country. Moody and Sankey had become household names throughout Scotland when they finally left the city on 21 January 1874. Just as their success in the north-east of England guaranteed them a hearing in Edinburgh, so their impact on the capital meant that they could enter every town and village in Scotland with realistic expectations of influencing people. It further appeared that shockwaves from the Edinburgh revival were not restricted to Scotland. William Blaikie told the Free Church General Assembly in May 1877 that news of the revival in the city had sparked off similar awakenings in the Cape Colony.[75] For a few short months in 1873-1874, Edinburgh could with some justification claim to be the religious capital of the Protestant world.

After Moody and Sankey left Edinburgh, the city's ministers sought to build upon the achievements of the previous two months. They continued to hold daily prayer meetings at the Free Assembly Hall which attracted audiences

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72 J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals*, p.144. See also *The Free Church Record*, (February 2,1874) p.27.

73 J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals*, p.145.

74 Ibid.

75 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1877) p.214.

of 400-800.[76] While slightly less than the attendance when Moody and Sankey were present, these were none the less respectable figures which indicated that the revival did not depend entirely upon the personalities of Moody and Sankey. Each Monday evening a meeting was held for recent converts which attracted audiences of 300-500. Those who attended these meetings generally came from one of the large Sunday evening gatherings which ministers held in their own churches, or from the services which students and probationers conducted at the Free Assembly Hall each Tuesday and Saturday evening.[77] Many ministers who had been initially sceptical of Moody and Sankey's approach, were won round, and carried on the work after the two evangelists had left the city.

Further, every effort was made to attract the working class to the revival services. Such efforts included the creation of an Edinburgh Free Breakfast Association in 1874. Each Sunday morning a group of young, male volunteers travelled through the Old Town inviting people to attend the Cowgate Free church where they would receive a free meal and be encouraged to stay behind for a service. Before long this new departure was attracting crowds of 700-800, and the mission's organisers were forced to move the breakfast service out of the Cowgate to the larger Drill Hall in Forest Road.[78]

After leaving Edinburgh, Moody and Sankey spent a fortnight in Dundee before moving to Glasgow on 8 February where they spent the next two months. Several large meetings were held on the day the two Americans arrived in the city which revealed extensive preparatory work. As in Edinburgh, the afternoon prayer meetings in Glasgow, held at the United Presbyterian church in Wellington Street, were an integral aspect of the revival in the city.[79] In Glasgow, Moody and Sankey clearly benefited from the reputation they had gained in Edinburgh. Before long they had created such a stir in Scotland's

76 Ibid., (1875) Appendix xx p.5.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid., pp.5-6.
79 J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals*, p.146.

industrial capital that there was no hall in the city large enough to accommodate all those who wanted to attend their services. Even after Moody and Sankey moved their services to the spacious Kibble Palace in the Botanic Gardens hundreds still had to be turned away.

Moody and Sankey received invaluable help from the United Evangelistic Association of Glasgow. This organisation was formed after their arrival in the city and embraced a number of Evangelical denominations. It worked to build upon the success of the revival in the city.[80] This organisation demonstrated how Moody and Sankey encouraged an ecumenical spirit among denominations in Glasgow which had spent much of the previous thirty years quarrelling amongst themselves. Similarly, when Moody and Sankey arrived in Glasgow they both benefited from and encouraged the temperance movement which had grown after 1860. Temperance was seen as a panacea for the city's social problems and the issue had dominated local authority elections. Temperance supporters hoped that greater control of the drink trade would lead to a sober, healthier population, while also helping local businesses by reducing the high levels of taxation required to pay for the social cost of drunkenness.[81] Temperance enthusiasts were keen to encourage Moody and Sankey's work in the city. In the long-term, the temperance movement in Glasgow received a boost from the Moody and Sankey revival. This was evident from the subsequent growth in the Band of Hope organisation, and the appointment of William Collins as the city's first teetotal Lord Provost in 1879.[82]

Although Moody and Sankey left Glasgow on 17 April, a number of religious groups carried on the work of the revival. Large open-air meetings had been held in Glasgow for several years, but as the summer of 1874 approached it

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80 G. Smith, *Alexander N. Sommerville--A Modern Apostle* (London,1891), p.160.

81 B. Aspinwall, *Portable Utopia: Glasgow and the United States 1820-1920* (Aberdeen,1984), p.129.

82 T. Brown, *Annals of the Disruption* (Edinburgh,1893), p.18. I. Maver, 'Politics and Power in the Scottish City: Glasgow Town Council in the Nineteenth Century', in T.M. Devine (ed.), *Scottish Elites* (Edinburgh,1994), pp.116-118.

was decided to extend the reach of the programme. The mission's organisers received permission from the city's magistrates to set up an evangelistic tent on Glasgow Green with accommodation for 2,000 people.[83] The initial intention was to open the tent each evening and have four meetings on Sundays with the morning service reserved for the very lowest who slept on Glasgow Green during the summer. Although a number of the destitute attended the first service, they "were so hungry, uncomfortable, and miserable, that it was nearly impossible to address them regarding spiritual matters with comfort, or any reasonable hope of having their attention."[84] Therefore, the organisers decided to provide a free breakfast to all those who arrived before the start of the meeting. When they first started to provide a free breakfast, three hundred people arrived before the service, but by the end of the summer the figure had risen to 1,600. As winter approached the tent was no longer suitable for the colder weather, nor could it accommodate all those who wanted to attend the service. Consequently, the mission's organisers moved the service to a Drill Hall near Glasgow Green where 2,000 people were soon taking advantage of the offer of a free breakfast.[85] After the breakfast a short service was performed, and those who wanted to discuss what they had heard were invited to stay behind for a second meeting. They were later visited in their homes by voluntary workers. Each individual was assigned a voluntary worker who was given responsibility for their welfare, which included looking after them when they were ill and with trying to find them employment.[86] There was unquestionably an element of "souperism" involved in the offer of a free breakfast, but it enabled the mission's organisers to reach many of the lowest sections of the community. Similarly, a Saturday Night Rescuing band was formed whose young male members visited

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83 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1875) Appendix xx p.3.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.

the city's theatres and pubs distributing leaflets. At the same time, a meeting was conducted at the Drill Hall to which they invited everybody they encountered. This proved another successful way to attract members of the working class.[87] Developments such as the Breakfast Service and the Rescuing band enabled the work of the revival to continue long after Moody and Sankey had left the city. It appeared that mid-day prayer meetings in Glasgow were still well attended as late as 1876.[88]

From Glasgow, Moody and Sankey visited Paisley, Greenock; and a number of towns in Ayrshire. In June, the two evangelists returned to the east of the country with another visit to Dundee where they enjoyed considerable success amongst those between the ages of fourteen and twenty-two.[89] From Dundee, Moody and Sankey entered Aberdeen for the first time on 14 June, and held a number of large, successful open-air meetings. With Aberdeen as their base in the north, the two Americans visited Arbroath, John O'Groats, Peterhead, Elgin, Nairn, Inverness, Tain and Wick.[90] Evidence of their work in these outlying areas is scanty, and in a number of areas Moody and Sankey visited a revival did not emerge until the two evangelists had left the district.

Although Moody and Sankey undertook some work in Oban, Campbeltown and Rothesay, they restricted most of their activities to below the Highland Line concentrating on the southern shores of the Moray, Caithness and Eastern Seaboard of Ross-shire.[91] While many areas in Scotland welcomed Moody and Sankey, the Highlands were not responsive. The language barrier was a significant factor. Conservative Calvinism also remained the dominant theology in the Highlands, which ensured that the area's inhabitants and ministers were suspicious of human efforts to achieve conversions. Of course, it

87 Ibid., p.4.
88 Ibid., (1876) Appendix xx p.6.
89 Ibid., (1874) p.79
90 J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals*, p.147.
91 Ibid.

might have helped if Moody and Sankey had spent more time in the Highlands. There were a number of other districts which they did not visit, such as the Free Synods of Perth and Stirling, Fife, and in Hawick, Lockerbie, Moffat and some areas in Aberdeenshire, whose inhabitants, the Free Church claimed, soon found themselves in the midst of a revival.[92]

In many ways the failure of the Highlands to respond to Moody and Sankey's appeal reflected the tensions which existed in Scottish religion in the third quarter of the century. Since the mid-nineteenth century, old style Calvinism had been forced to confront the challenge of Biblical Criticism. At this stage, a majority in each of the mainstream Presbyterian Churches could be described as theologically conservative and they were unprepared for the advent of Biblical Criticism.[93] Given the Free Church's rigid attitude towards many social and theological questions it was ironic that Biblical Criticism became so closely associated with that denomination. Whereas Lowland ministers and members began to question the doctrine of predestination, their counterparts in the Highlands clung to their view of traditional Presbyterianism. By stressing the importance of a convert's decision for whether or not they would be saved, Moody and Sankey threatened to undermine the traditional Calvinist belief in predestination and so their views were an anathema in the Highlands. No doubt many ministers in the Lowlands were also aware of the implications of Moody's message, but felt that they could minimise its long-term effects.[94] Similarly, Lowland Free Church members and ministers were moving increasingly in the direction of union with the United Presbyterian Church even if it meant becoming a Voluntary Church in principle as well as in practice. In contrast, ministers and their congregations in the Highlands stood rigidly to the principle

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92 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1875) p.5.

93 A.C. Cheyne, *The Transforming of the Kirk* (Edinburgh,1983), p.68. See also K.R. Ross, 'Calvinists in Controversy: John Kennedy, Horatious Bonar and the Moody mission of 1873-1874', *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology*, (1991), pp.51-63.

94 I.H. Murray, *Revival and Revivalism: The Making and Marring of American Evangelists 1750-1858* (Edinburgh,1994), p.404.

of an Establishment, which they considered to be an integral aspect of the Free Church of Scotland's constitution. The Free Church had entered into negotiations with the United Presbyterian Church in 1863 to look at the possibility of union between the two denominations. However, these negotiations had continually floundered due to the opposition of a small but vocal minority in the Highlands, marshalled by a Lowland minister, James Begg. Ministers like Begg and his colleague John Kennedy of Dingwall did not feel that union was worth it, if the price was that the Free Church would have to compromise some of its most fundamental beliefs such as that of the relationship between Church and State. This was a stance which frustrated many of their pro-union counterparts in the south. With the Free Church in the Highlands separated geographically, linguistically and theologically from the rest of Scotland, it was perhaps not surprising that Moody and Sankey's success was restricted to below the Highland line.

Conversely, religious divisions in Scotland accounted for much of the success which Moody and Sankey experienced south of the Highlands. In addition to the rise of Biblical Criticism, the Churches had been forced to grapple with the question of disestablishment since the early 1860s. Initially, the campaign for disestablishment emerged in relation to the Anglican Church of Ireland. The Anglican Church of Ireland was an unusual anomaly among Established Churches - given that it claimed to represent an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country - but its existence could not be challenged without also bringing the entire notion of an Established Church into question. The issue of disestablishment in Ireland dominated the general election in Scotland in 1868. Following the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1871, there was the start of a campaign for disestablishment in Scotland.[95] To compound these

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95 See J. Kellas, 'The Liberal Party and the Scottish Church Disestablishment Crisis', *English Historical Review*, lxxix (1964), pp.31-46; G.I.T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain 1832-1914* (Edinburgh,1986); I.G.C. Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland 1832-1914* (Edinburgh,1986).

difficulties, the Education Act of 1872 had given only a very precarious safeguard to the provision of religious education. Thus, it appeared in the early 1870s that Scottish national life was becoming increasingly secular in tone. Given the volatile religious environment in Scotland, it was hardly surprising that Moody and Sankey found people so receptive to a simple Gospel message which avoided theological and ecclesiastical controversies. In turn, this further explains why Moody and Sankey's influence did not extend into the Highlands. It was in the south of Scotland that the religious controversies were at their most intense. In contrast, the Highlands had maintained traditional Presbyterian beliefs and practices. While the historical accuracy of the Bible was challenged in the country's theological colleges, the Highlands retained a preference for a literal interpretation of the Bible. Similarly, while an increasing number of scholars and ministers held that salvation was available to all, the Highlands remained devoted to the doctrine of predestination. As the case for disestablishment gathered pace in southern Scotland, the Highland Free Church looked back to the days of the Disruption fathers to show that it was State interference with an Established Church which had brought the Free Church into existence, and not an objection to the principle of an Established Church.[96] Moody and Sankey clearly benefited from the religious controversies which had emerged below the Highland line during the 1860s. In turn, their visit had an influence on religion in Scotland that continued long after they had left the country. With their emphasis on the free offer of grace Moody and Sankey helped to undermine the belief in predestination. In its place came a greater commitment to Arminian teaching which stressed that people had the capacity to accept or reject the Gospel.[97] Indeed, in 1876, James Robertson petitioned the Free Church General

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96 J. Macleod, 'Origins of the Free Presbyterian Church in Scotland', Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, (1995).

97 A. Stewart and J.K. Cameron, *The Free Church of Scotland: The Crisis of 1900* 2nd edn. (Edinburgh,1989), p.152.

Assembly in an attempt to abandon the Westminster Confession of Faith.[98]

While Moody's preaching raised the hackles of theological conservatives, Ira D. Sankey's singing and organ playing also aroused strong emotions. In Scotland, music in church services had traditionally been restricted to congregational singing of the Psalms without musical accompaniment. Modern hymns had been introduced to Scotland by the Relief Church in the late eighteenth century, but neither hymn singing nor musical accompaniment took off among Scottish Presbyterian Churches until the third quarter of the nineteenth century. This was a direct consequence of the revivals during that period. Although music had been used in some cases during the revival between 1859-1862, it was given a prominence during Moody and Sankey's stay in Scotland which it had never enjoyed previously. Throughout their time in Scotland, Moody justifiably received most of the plaudits for the revival, but as William Blaikie pointed out: "Mr. Sankey's aid as a singer was from the first an indispensable feature of the movement."[99] Adverts for their meetings tended to stress the role which Sankey's singing and organ playing would play in their services.[100] No doubt its novelty factor was an enormous attraction. Like Moody's preaching, however, Sankey's use of music came at a time when there had recently been controversy over the role which music should play in Scottish church services. Initially, these disputes had emerged within the Church of Scotland in 1863, after Robert Lee of Old Greyfriars had introduced a harmonioum into his services. Lee followed this in 1865 by introducing an organ. Such a radical step created alarm in some quarters, but when the subject was considered by the Church of Scotland in 1866, the use of instruments was effectively sanctioned after the General Assembly agreed to leave such questions to the discretion of individual presbyteries. This decision encouraged the spread

98 A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch, *The Church in Late Victorian Scotland 1874-1900* (Edinburgh,1978), p.38.

99 W.G. Blaikie, *Recollections of a Busy Life--An Autobiography*, p.332.

100 J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals*, p.142.

of organ accompaniment in Scotland, and by the time Moody and Sankey arrived musical accompaniment was commonplace in Church of Scotland churches.[101]

Nevertheless, the use of musical instruments remained rare in the Free Church. Consequently, Sankey's portable harmonioum contributed to the growing debate on musical accompaniment. Many within the Free Church did welcome the use of instrumental music in church services. But it was not until 1882 that two Free Church congregations in Glasgow petitioned the General Assembly for permission to use organs in their worship. James Begg led the resistance, claiming such a step would be unconstitutional within the Free Church. While Begg and others argued that organs and modern hymns would inevitably detract from the importance of preaching the word, those who favoured musical accompaniment felt that it would lead to a brighter atmosphere at many previously bleak church services.[102] Despite the opposition of Begg and his Highland supporters, the Assembly in 1883 sanctioned the use of instrumental music. Predictably, the General Assembly's decision held little sway in the Highlands where, in contrast to the Lowlands, the use of an organ remained the exception.[103] This served to widen the divisions between the Highland and Lowland branches of the Free Church.

When Moody and Sankey finally left Scotland for Ireland in September 1874, they had left an indelible impression upon the country. The two Americans had understood better than any of their contemporaries the prevailing mood within the country for a warmer and more all-embracing form of emotional evangelism.[104] In common with the spiritual awakening between 1859-1862, the Moody and Sankey revival had a profound influence upon the young. This was

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101 K.R. Ross, 'Musical Instruments in Worship', in N. Cameron (ed), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh,1993), pp.615-616; J. Inglis, 'The Scottish Churches and the Organ', Ph.D. thesis, University of Glasgow (1987).

102 See J. Begg, *The Use of Organs and other Instruments of Music in Christian Worship Indefensible* (Glasgow,1866).

103 K.R. Ross, 'Musical Instruments in Worship', p.616.

104 J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals*, p.149. And A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch, *The Church in Late Victorian Scotland 1874-1900*, p.14.

particularly evident in the country's sabbath schools. Since the Education Act of 1872, the Churches had been forced to place a greater emphasis upon sabbath schools as an integral aspect of their mission work. The period between 1870-1890 marked the high water mark for sabbath schools in Victorian Scotland, and their significance in this period was in many ways a legacy of Moody and Sankey's visit.[105] The Americans' influence upon the young was also evident among university students. In Edinburgh, students at New College provided Moody and Sankey with invaluable help, and some of them were sent to other parts of the country so they could let people know about recent developments in the capital. It was the New College student, Henry Drummond, who became Moody's leading assistant in the capital.[106] The influence of the revival upon students in Edinburgh was also evident at the Normal Teacher Training College at Moray House. The Free Church considered this extremely important given that those student teachers would soon form the backbone of the new national education system.[107] Moody and Sankey's hold over the young also had important long-term ramifications. Students were at an impressionable age, and could hardly fail to be impressed by two charismatic American evangelists. As we have seen, Moody and Sankey had little experience of the denominational conflict which had plagued Scotland in the previous thirty years and they were willing to cooperate with all evangelical denominations. Similarly, their view of salvation was far removed from the popular Calvinist vision of heaven as a private members club only open to the elect. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that many students followed Moody and Sankey's example as they entered the ministry, encouraging a less exclusive Gospel and a greater mood of cooperation among the Presbyterian Churches.

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105 C.G. Brown, 'The Sunday school Movement in Scotland, 1780-1914', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xxi (1981), p.17.

106 J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals*, p.148. See also G.A. Smith, *The Life of Henry Drummond* (London,1899).

107 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1874) Appendix xx p.4.

If Scotland had good reason to be thankful to Moody, the evangelist owed an enormous debt of gratitude to the people of Scotland for the way they had responded to his evangelistic style. In America, Moody had been largely unknown as an evangelist outside of his native Chicago. But after news of his success in Britain had filtered across the Atlantic he received a number of invitations from those who hoped that he could bring about a similar revival in their town or city.[108] It must be stressed, however, that it was only after he had left Britain that Moody was able to encourage revivals with all the benefits associated with being a well-known evangelist. This fact merely highlighted how genuine his success in Scotland had been, as it had been accomplished among a population which was initially unfamiliar with both his name and methods. Although Moody later returned to Scotland in 1881-1882 and 1891-1892, he never managed to generate the level of enthusiasm which had characterised the revival between 1873-1874. Nevertheless, after his first visit to Scotland, Moody could justifiably claim to have achieved more in the space of ten short months than most evangelists could claim in an entire career.

Moody and Sankey's visit to Scotland had a number of long-term consequences for the Scottish Churches, but in the short-term it had shown the Free Church how it had to adopt a more professional approach towards missionary work within Scotland. Since the Disruption, the convener of the Free Church's Home Mission Committee had been forced to juggle his pastoral duties with a responsibility for overseeing the Committee's continually expanding activities. This was a combination which worked to the detriment of both. By the mid-1870s the Committee had an annual expenditure of between £7000-8,000. Thus, the Committee felt it could benefit from employing a full-time Secretary to coordinate the Committee's home-mission operations. After the Churches had lost their hold over education, the success of their evangelistic programmes became even more important: and a full-time Secretary would at least be able to

108 J. Coupar, *Scottish Revivals*, p.152.

devote his full attention to the subject. The United Presbyterians had been the first denomination to entrust one individual on a full-time basis with overseeing their home-mission activities. The Church of Scotland later followed the United Presbyterians' example by appointing Keith Phin, who the Free Church felt had brought "energy and efficiency" to the Established Church's home-mission programme.[109]

Having seen how successfully the plan had worked for other denominations, the Free Church General Assembly in 1874 accepted the Committee's proposal for a full-time Home Mission Secretary.[110] The Secretary was given responsibility for annually visiting all those stations and churches which received grants from the Committee, in order to find out how the money was used and to determine whether a congregation still needed funding. The Secretary would also be responsible for finding out which areas could benefit from a church-extension programme, and for stimulating local missionary efforts at a grass-roots level. It would be up to the Secretary to suggest new evangelistic schemes such as the Miners' Mission Fund, and to recommend whether a congregation should be sanctioned. The Home Mission Secretary would retain his ministerial status and a place in his respective presbytery, but would have to resign his charge so that he could devote his full attention to home-mission work.[111] Perhaps appropriately given the extent of the city's problems, Dr John Adam of the Wellpark congregation in Glasgow and the convener of the Colonial Committee, was appointed the first full-time Secretary of the Home Mission Committee. Although Adam could not force people to attend church, it was his responsibility to make sure that religious ordinances were available to the entire Scottish population, and to remove the barriers, where possible, which stood in the way of people attending church.

The revival of 1873-1874 coincided with a time of enormous change

109 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1874) p.82
110 *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1874) p.8.
111 Ibid.

within the Free Church. Robert Candlish, the leader of the Free Church and one of the original Disruption fathers, died in 1873 at the age of 67.[112] With Candlish gone, the unofficial leadership of the Free Church passed to Robert Rainy, Candlish's replacement as Principal of New College.[113] Before becoming Principal, Rainy had defended both Darwin's theories and Biblical Criticism from his position as Professor of Church History at New College from 1862. Politically Rainy was a Liberal, appropriate given that he was a relation of Gladstone, and in 1872 he became a supporter of disestablishment. Thus, Rainy's emergence as leader of the Free Church brought a monumental change in direction. Essentially, Rainy felt that the Free Church should alter its position on the Church-State relationship in order to reflect a Scottish society which had become increasingly pluralistic. In such a society, Rainy felt that the Churches would be more effective if they were free from State control. Rainy also felt that disestablishment would pave the way for Presbyterian reunion by placing the Scottish Churches on an equal footing.

In 1874, Rainy was able to bring about an alliance between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches on the subject of disestablishment. This was achieved with the support of a large section of the Free Church, though with one notable exception: James Begg. Rainy was given the title of "black Rainy" in certain parts of the Highlands where people were outraged by what they regarded as his betrayal of the Free Church's most important principles. Despite their alliance on disestablishment, Rainy was unable in the 1870s to bring about formal union with the United Presbyterians. This failure was largely due to James Begg. After seeking legal advice, Begg had determined that a minority remaining within the Free Church would have an excellent chance of being awarded the Church's property by the civil courts if they could establish that they represented the principles of the Church which had been formed in 1843.

112 See, W. Wilson, *Memorials of Robert Smith Candlish* (Edinburgh,1880); J.L. Watson, *Life of Robert Smith Candlish* (Edinburgh,1882).

113 See P.C. Simpson, *The Life of Principal Rainy* (2 vols.,London,1909).

Although there was no possibility of Presbyterian Church union in the short-term, the issue of disestablishment dominated the religious environment in Scotland in the last quarter of the century and became the key political issue in general elections between 1874-1892. Those who favoured disestablishment formed Associations in order to carry out their campaign on a national level. The Scottish Disestablishment and Disendowment Association had been established in 1871, and this organisation was joined by the Scottish Council of the Liberation Society in 1877.[114] These organisations helped to push the disestablishment issue to the forefront of the political and religious environment in Scotland. But the mid-1870s was a difficult time to persuade either the government or the country at large that the Church of Scotland should be disestablished.

As was shown in the previous chapter, the Church of Scotland had experienced a revival during the 1850s and 1860s, and this was maintained in the 1870s. The Church of Scotland's leadership understood that it would be almost impossible for any government to pass disestablishment if the general public opposed such a measure. Therefore, the Church of Scotland set out to make itself more relevant to the lives of people throughout the country. One aspect of this policy was the creation of a Church Life and Work Committee in 1869 to oversee the evangelistic and pastoral work of the Church. Another important element in the Church of Scotland's campaign against disestablishment was an unprecedented commitment to territorialism. In 1871, Keith Phin, the convener of the Home Mission Committee, asserted that:

> Experience has proved that the territorial system is the only one on which Home Mission work can be effectively performed among the ignorant and the depraved, and that wherever that system has been properly tried it has been crowned with success.[115]

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114 J.R. Wolfe, 'Disestablishment', in N. Cameron (ed.), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh,1993), p.246. See also J. Kellas, 'The Liberal Party and the Scottish Church Disestablishment Crisis', pp.31-46.

115 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,* (1871) p.164.

Although James Robertson had worked tirelessly to raise the money by which to finance an endowed territorial mission, he had no practical experience of conducting an aggressive territorial operation in a large city. Norman Macleod of the Barony parish church in the east end of Glasgow was one of the first ministers in the post-Disruption Church of Scotland to organise his congregation on the territorial principle.[116] In 1851, Macleod became the minister at the Barony church, and in 1852 he began a programme of aggressive territorialism in the parish. Before long, the Barony parish church boasted an impressive range of agencies, including Sunday evening services for those in working clothes which proved an enormous success.[117] It was Macleod's sympathy and compassion for the poor that most distinguished him. In order to finance his evangelistic programme in the Barony parish, Macleod regularly appealed to the wealthiest members of his congregation.

In 1866, Macleod became editor of the new, popular, religious magazine *Good Words*. Macleod's commitment to territorialism was evident from the contents of the magazine's first issue, which included an account of a territorial operation in the German city of Elberfeldt. This was an indication of how Chalmers' territorial plan had an appeal which cut across national boundaries. Macleod was so impressed by this article that he decided to visit Elberfeldt to see the system in operation. After spending two days in Germany, Macleod wrote an account of German territorial welfare programmes in *Good Words* which further helped to publicise the territorial system.[118] Macleod also published a pamphlet in 1867 in which he claimed that Chalmers' territorial system was the only effective way to deal with the growing problem of urban poverty.[119] When Macleod died in 1872, his brother Donald of the Park church in Glasgow became

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116 See D. Macleod, *Memoir of Norman Macleod* (2 vols.,London,1876); J. Wellwood, *Norman Macleod* (Edinburgh,1897); P. Hillis, 'Towards a New Social Theology: the contribution of Norman Macleod', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xxiv (1992), pp.263-285.

117 D. Macleod, *Memoir of Norman Macleod*, pp.57-60.

118 Ibid., p.131.

119 N. Macleod, *How Can We Best Relieve Our Deserving Poor?* (London,1867).

editor of *Good Words*.[120] Like Norman, Donald Macleod was a supporter of the territorial system and continued to use *Good Words* to publicise the benefits of territorialism. To his credit, Donald Macleod understood that the working class felt patronised by middle-class missionaries, and insisted that they were entitled to an independent working-class church rather than a ragged mission station.[121]

Archibald Hamilton Charteris, the Professor of Biblical Criticism and Biblical Antiquity at the University of Edinburgh, was also instrumental in spreading the influence of territorialism within the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh. In 1870, Charteris encouraged students from the Edinburgh University Missionary Association to adopt the suppressed Tolbooth charge as a field in which to implement a territorial operation.[122] This experiment proved such a success that the congregation was re-endowed in 1873 and its members signed a memorial for the ordination of George Wilson, Charteris' long time assistant in home-mission work. Having successfully reendowed and revitalised one congregation, the University Missionary Association turned its attention to the Old Kirk in Blackfriars Street (another suppressed charge) and also to the parish of St. Margaret. Such enthusiasm for mission work among the next generation of Church of Scotland ministers boded well for the future of territorialism in the Established Church.[123]

Through the activities of ministers like the Macleod brothers and Charteris, the Church of Scotland continued the progress which had been made through territorialism by James Robertson. Crucially they had also made the Church relevant to the lives of thousands of working-class people who might

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120 S. Smith, *Donald Macleod of Glasgow* (Edinburgh,1926).

121 S.J. Brown, 'Thomas Chalmers and the Communal Ideal in Victorian Scotland', in T.C. Smout (ed.), *Victorian Values* (Oxford,1992), pp.76-77. See also D. Macleod, 'The Parochial System', in *The Church and the People,* St Giles Lectures, 6th Series, (Edinburgh,1886); D. Macleod, *Home Missions* (Glasgow,1883); D. Macleod, 'Thomas Chalmers', in *Scottish Divines 1505-1872* , St Giles Lectures, 3rd Series (Edinburgh,1883).

122 A. Gordon, *The Life of Archibald Hamilton Charteris* (London,1912), p.157.

123 Ibid., p.167. See also *The Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Mission Record* (October 1,1873) pp.496-497 and (December 1,1873) pp.536-537.

otherwise have been swayed by arguments in favour of disestablishment. Another important aspect in the Church of Scotland's offensive against those who favoured disestablishment, especially in the Free Church, was to emphasise that Chalmers had favoured a system of endowed territorial churches. This was a remarkable development given the fact that Chalmers had been disliked within the Church of Scotland after the Disruption. It was only after passions had subsided and a new generation of ministers had emerged, that the Church of Scotland was able to enter into a battle for the soul of Chalmers' territorial plan.

In 1873, Archibald Scott, the future leader of the Church of Scotland, published a pamphlet, *Endowed Territorial Work.*[124] In this pamphlet, Scott argued that endowments were essential to the creation of a system of territorial churches which would be capable of providing for the entire population. If this plan was implemented, Smith claimed, there would be no need to expect the poor to contribute beyond their means as was often the case in Voluntary churches. Smith also argued that the middle class would not be able to control the Church through their position as its paymasters.[125] Like Charteris, Scott had been influenced greatly by the revival between 1859-1862. But whereas Charteris later concluded that the territorial system was not a panacea for all the Church's problems, Scott remained sceptical that any new plan would prove more effective than the territorial method.[126]

Similarly, in 1875, William Smith, the minister at North Leith and James Robertson's successor as convener of the Church Endowment Committee, delivered a lecture for the Baird Lectures on Endowed Territorial Work.[127] Some people felt that the Free Church was a good example of how a Church could be successful at a national level in the absence of State funding, but Smith

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124 A. Scott, *Endowed Territorial Work, the Means of Meeting Spiritual Destitution* (Edinburgh,1873). See also Lord Sands, *Dr Archibald Scott* (Edinburgh,1919).

125 A. Scott, *Endowed Territorial Work*, especially pp.9-33.

126 Lord Sands, *Dr Archibald Scott*, p.88.

127 W. Smith, *Endowed Territorial Work: Its Supreme Importance to the Church and Country* (Edinburgh,1875).

argued that its achievements were based on the Sustentation Fund which he felt embodied a number of aspects of endowment although the money was raised annually on a voluntary basis.[128] Only if a church was endowed, Smith argued, could the minister be free to preach independently without fear of offending those who paid his wages.[129] The Free Church minister, William Blaikie, resented Smith's charge that the Free Church favoured the middle class, and pointed to the territorial work which the denomination had carried out in Edinburgh's Old Town to show that such accusations had no foundation.[130] Nevertheless, by the mid-1870s, it was clear that the Church of Scotland's use of territorialism had become an essential and largely successful part of their campaign to prevent disestablishment. In 1876, Keith Phin, the Home Mission Committee's convener, felt that the tide was finally turning in the Church of Scotland's favour.

> It is daily becoming more and more manifest that the Church of Scotland has got a firm hold upon the people, and that if she will but vigorously prosecute her Home Mission, she will be the instrument in the hand of God of such unquestionable good to the whole nation, and especially to those teeming multitudes in our cities, large towns, and mining and manufacturing districts, whose social and spiritual amelioration is ardently sought by Christian philanthropists and patriots, that her position as the National Church will be impregnable.[131]

The growing number of church-extension campaigns which the Church of Scotland undertook were an excellent indication of the denomination's renewed confidence. During 1844, in the aftermath of the Disruption, the Church of Scotland had spent only £1,865 on church extension. This figure had risen to £7,520 in 1874, and in 1876 the Church of Scotland spent £15,247 on church extension throughout the country.[132] In Dundee, the Church of Scotland had

128 Ibid., pp.213-214.

129 Ibid., p.182.

130 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1875) p.163.

131 Ibid., (1876) p.179

132 Ibid., (1877) pp.178-179.

been responsible for so little church building that it had exactly the same number of churches in the city during the mid-1860s, when the population had grown to 100,000, as it did in 1811 when the city's population was only 30,000. On the completion of the St. Mark's church in 1869, the Church of Scotland set out to build five new churches in Dundee.[133] Similarly, in Aberdeen, the Church of Scotland had never fully recovered from the Disruption. In the early 1870s, however, it was finally able to undertake a church-extension campaign after it had been given £7,500 by James Baird of Auchdennens.[134] This church building campaign was important if the Established Church was to have any future in Aberdeen, after it was calculated in September 1873 that the existing eleven churches in the city could only hold 12,000 people. This was completely unsatisfactory given that the Established Church had approximately 13,000 members and a similar number of adherents in Aberdeen. With the population of Aberdeen increasing by 1,500 a year the Established Church was left with no choice but to increase its church accommodation in the city.[135]

The Church of Scotland also began a church-extension programme in Edinburgh in 1877. The Presbytery of Edinburgh had held an investigation into the religious needs of the city which discovered that the Established Church required seven new churches.[136] Most of these churches were required in the southside of the city which had recently undergone substantial development to provide for the better off sections of the working class who were leaving the Old Town. The Edinburgh Church Extension Association held its first meeting on 5 November 1877, and predicted that it would cost £49,000 to build seven new churches. During the Association's first meeting it decided that all the churches which it helped to establish would be run on the territorial principle.[137]

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133 *The Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Missionary Record*, (May 1,1872) pp.35-36.
134 Ibid., (September 1,1873) p.472.
135 Ibid.
136 Ibid., (July 1,1878) p.105.
137 Ibid., (December 1,1877) p.538.

The Church of Scotland's attempt to create an endowed territorial church was an integral aspect in its programme of Church defence. If an Established Church was not relevant to the vast majority of the population - as in Ireland - then there could be little reasoned opposition to it being disestablished. In contrast, if an Established Church had a hold over people from all classes and could retain public affection, it would be difficult to justify a policy of disestablishment. For thirty years the Church of Scotland had been on the back foot as the Free Church set out to prove that it was the true national Church of Scotland. From 1874, however, with the Free Church having reneged on its traditional Church-State position, the Church of Scotland was able to reassert itself as the true historical, Established Church of Scotland. Moreover, the Established Church was able to point an accusing finger at its critics and dismiss them as jealous Voluntaries who had failed to achieve what they had set out to accomplish in 1843. As one anonymous commentator in the *Glasgow Herald* said of the Free Church.

> This Church, with all its zeal, wealth, and noble liberality - which was founded in 1843 in the midst of an outburst of fervour such as has seldom been manifested by any people in the history of the human race - which for the most of the years that she has been in existence as a separate body has been ministered to by a body of remarkably able ministers, and had her affairs directed and conducted by some of the ablest ecclesiastics Scotland ever possessed - notwithstanding all her privileges and advantages and gifts - has failed. She has not, with all her efforts and sacrifices, been able to make even the faintest scratch on the surface of the growing heathenism of our country.[138]

These were strong words and they were unfair given the amount of home-mission work the Free Church had undertaken. There could be no disputing the fact, however, that the Free Church had failed to keep pace with the rate of population growth even if most of the territorial experiments which it undertook had become resounding successes.

Without doubt, 1874 marked a sea change for the Free Church. Before

138 Ibid., (April,1879) p.328.

1874, although an increasing number of its ministers and members were in favour of disestablishment, the Free Church had at least had a purpose which made it different from any other denomination in Scotland. It was the alternative Established Church, free from the stain of Erastianism and the iniquity of patronage. But 1874 was not only the year of Moody and Sankey and the Free Church's alliance on disestablishment with the United Presbyterians. It was also the year in which Disraeli's Conservative government repealed the Patronage Act in an effort to popularise both the Conservative party and the Church of Scotland. Lord Aberdeen's Benefices Act of 1843 had enabled congregations to reject any patron's choice as minister, provided that the presbytery judged their reason for doing so to be sound, but while the Patronage Act remained on the statute book it provided valuable ammunition for the Church of Scotland's opponents. After patronage was abolished people were entitled to ask just why Scotland still needed the Free Church, and how it was different from a number of other Presbyterian Dissenting Churches in Scotland. After coming out in favour of disestablishment in 1874, it seemed that the Free Church was regarding itself as a gathered Church of true believers with a responsibility to its members and to them alone. If this was the case then there was surely no point in the Free Church undertaking extensive home-mission programmes and ambitious church building schemes. The United Presbyterian Church, however, had held precisely the same principles since it was formed in 1847, but that denomination had still carried out far-reaching evangelistic programmes. The question of whether Voluntary Churches had a responsibility to undertake evangelistic programmes was certainly an interesting dilemma for such denominations. The outlook of many people within the Free Church was explained most effectively by the minister, John Muir, in December 1877.

> I say nothing as to what the future of Scottish Presbyterianism is to be, whether one large established or disestablished Church; but, while that question may be held in abeyance, the Free Church must not reduce in the slightest degree her home mission efforts so long as

> in Glasgow and other large centres of population there are so many thousands practically non-churchgoing.[139]

Put simply, the future could wait if it seemed as though the Churches would collapse in the present. As a consequence of such thinking, an overture was submitted to the General Assembly in 1875 by the Presbyteries of Dundee, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Hamilton and Linlithgow which asked for the formation of a Central Church Building Fund.[140] It was hoped that this fund would provide for those areas where there had been a large population increase. The Free Church had already begun another Church Building Society in Glasgow in 1872, which had raised £19,000 by 1875. Many in the Free Church felt that they required a central church-extension fund from which all towns and cities could draw money. As things stood the only money available for church extension came from one half of the Home Mission Committee's biennial collection. This meant that the Committee could only give grants of between £50-100, which was totally inadequate given the cost of church building in 1875.[141] Rather than simply accept the overture, however, the Assembly appointed a Committee to prepare a report on a Church Extension Fund to be presented to the Assembly in 1876. The Committee hoped to raise a total of £100,000 although the maximum grant for each proposed church would not exceed £1,500 or a quarter of the entire cost of a church building.[142] Subscribers would also have an opportunity to specify which congregation they wanted to receive their money.[143] The proposal for a Church Extension Building Fund showed the continued commitment by the Free Church to the country at large, but the second half of the 1870s was a difficult time in which to begin a fund raising campaign. No sooner had the Free Church embarked upon a church building programme than the Scottish economy

139 *The Home and Foreign Mission Record of the Free Church of Scotland,* (January 1,1878) p.7.
140 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1875) p.165.
141 Ibid., p.165.
142 Ibid., (1876) Appendix iii b.
143 Ibid., p.137.

slipped into an acute depression. Therefore, John Adam, the Home Mission Committee's convener, told the Assembly in 1876 that the Committee would postpone any attempt to raise money in the following year. Instead, it would concentrate its efforts on finding out where churches were most needed.[144]

As a result of these investigations, Adam was able to inform the Assembly in 1877 that Glasgow would need between twelve and fourteen new churches. Because of the rising cost of building sites in Glasgow, each church - including the site - would cost between £7,000 and £10,000.[145] This seemed a colossal figure and indicated that the proposed fund of £100,000 would not go very far given that it was to be spent throughout Scotland. After a delay of two years since the original overture, the Assembly finally sanctioned the creation of a Church Extension Building Fund in 1877.[146] The Committee still hoped to raise a central fund of £100,000, but no congregation would receive any money until it had raised a substantial part of its costs locally.[147] This was a sensible policy, but one which would clearly penalise the poorest districts.

In the following year the Assembly's Committee held public meetings in thirty-six of the Free Church's seventy-two presbyteries in an effort to publicise the Building Fund and encourage donations.[148] John Adam attended most of these meetings and claimed that the Committee would have received more money had it not been for the trade depression. Adam also blamed the ecclesiastical and doctrinal controversies in the 1870s for the fact that the Committee had managed to raise only £82,119 by 1878. This was in many respects a substantial sum, considering the existing economic climate. Glasgow and its wealthy neighbour Helensburgh had together raised £36,120, while Edinburgh and its neighbourhood had managed to raise £24,000. These were respectable

144 Ibid.
145 Ibid., (1877) p.164.
146 Ibid., p.169.
147 Ibid., Appendix iii b.
148 Ibid., (1878) p.158.

amounts, though Aberdeen had been only able to raise a modest £959.[149] Nevertheless, by the Assembly in 1879 the Committee had raised a further £17,000 to take the total subscriptions to £97,000.[150] The Committee was particularly disappointed, however, given that hardly any of the subscribers had been affected by the collapse of the City of Glasgow Bank in 1878.[151] The Home Mission Committee remained convinced that the Free Church and the country at large needed another church-extension programme. But the *North British Daily Mail* undertook a census in March 1876 which seemed to indicate that Glasgow, at least, did not require additional churches.[152] The findings of the census were expanded upon by a speaker at a meeting of the Free Church Elders' Association on 29 January 1877.[153]

On the day the census was taken the newspaper discovered that 29,059 people, including children, attended the seventy Free churches in the city of Glasgow. Twelve of these churches attracted over 600 people and twenty-one attracted between 400-600. Thirty-seven churches, however, attracted below 400 people: giving each an average attendance of 264. Overall, the average attendance at all the churches was only 415.[154] As each church was capable of holding an average 900 people, the census seemed to indicate that the majority of Free churches were less than half full. To the speaker at the Elders' Association, there seemed little point in the Free Church maintaining seventy churches when forty-eight churches with room for an attendance of 606 each would be ample accommodation for all those who were in the habit of attending a Free church. He also calculated that the twenty-two surplus churches could raise £121,000 if they were sold, whereas it was costing the Free Church £9,000 a year simply to

149 Ibid.

150 Ibid., (1879) p.139.

151 Ibid., p.141.

152 *North British Daily Mail* (April 5,1876).

153 The speaker at the meeting of the Elders' Association later published his speech in an untitled pamphlet: *The Position of the Free Church of Scotland in Glasgow and Suburbs, From a Commercial and Practical Point of View* (Glasgow,1877).

154 Ibid., p.7.

keep them open.[155] To exacerbate matters, he claimed that the situation of over accommodation was worse in the Free Church than in either the Established or United Presbyterian Churches. As far as he was concerned, the Church of Scotland could afford to run half-empty churches and churches which were not self supporting because of the system of endowments which guaranteed the minister's salary. Similarly, he felt that the United Presbyterians could afford to be less prudent than the Free Church because they enjoyed substantial financial support among the city's wealthiest classes.[156] This had been something which the Free Church could claim after the Disruption, but seemingly not in the 1870s. It also appeared that there were thirty-two Free Church congregations in the city which did not contribute to the Sustentation Fund an amount equal to the surplus dividend and a further twenty-six congregations which were not self supporting.[157] In contrast to the traditional view of church building, he felt that: "The mere existence of churches will not convert non-church going into church going people, least of all, thinly attended churches, which repel rather than attract."[158] Of course, in many ways the speaker was absolutely right. Church building alone would not create churchgoers. But if church building was followed by aggressive evangelism, it stood a far greater chance of being successful: and that was where he had missed the point. When people demanded more churches it was not just a physical structure they wanted. Instead, they wanted a church surrounded by a manageable population, and overseen by an evangelistic minister with an aggressive agency. In short, Chalmers' territorial method.

Although some people at the aforementioned Elders' meeting objected to looking at the question from a commercial viewpoint, and felt that it was hostile to church extension (undeniably so), it was difficult to deny that the city seemed

155 Ibid., pp.7-8.
156 Ibid., p.9.
157 Ibid., p.10.
158 Ibid., p.11.

to have more Free churches than it needed.[159] In reply, the speaker argued that the Church's finances should be as solid as its creed.[160] Churches seldom like to be reminded about the need to manage their finances carefully, but this particular debate reflected a whole range of tensions within the Free Church. In theory at least, the Free Church after 1874 should have seen itself as a gathered Church of true believers and not as a national Church with a responsibility to provide for the entire population. But old habits die hard, and although it seemed as though the country had sufficient church accommodation, the Free Church could not shake off the belief that church building allied with aggressive territorialism would create churchgoers. Nor could it shake off the belief in itself as a national Church with a responsibility to place ordinances before the entire Scottish population.

Conclusion

Although the revival between 1859-1862 had generated enormous excitement, it soon transpired that the spiritual awakening was not a panacea for the variety of ills which plagued Scottish society. In many ways this came as a bitter blow to both Free Church ministers and members. The revival which had arrived in 1859 was the first to affect Scotland in the Free Church's short lifetime and so it carried the burden of expectation. After failing to match these expectations, by the early 1870s a mood of despondency had gripped the entire Church. In this environment the best the Free Church could have hoped for was another revival. This was one of the reasons why Moody and Sankey were given such a warm welcome in Scotland. The almost immediate success enjoyed by Moody and Sankey in Scotland was in stark contrast to the way they had been initially received in England. Itinerant preachers had often played a prominent

159 Ibid., p.18.
160 Ibid.

role in previous revivals which Scotland had experienced, but no revival had been so closely associated with certain individuals as the one enjoyed between 1873-1874. No doubt Moody and Sankey's forceful personalities helped to stimulate curiosity in the revival. In many ways, however, their personal appeal worked against territorialism. The revival of 1859-1862 had allowed local ministers to emerge as leaders of their local community with their churches as the focal point in the lives of those who lived within the surrounding territory. Consequently, the revival had helped to emphasise the importance of territorial churches. In contrast, the revival between 1873 and 1874 had been dominated by large-scale revival meetings, usually with Moody and Sankey in attendance. It was clearly not intended, but Moody and Sankey undermined the importance of the territorial minister working tirelessly at the grass-roots-level. As we shall see, even after they had left the country, Moody and Sankey's legacy manifested itself in a belief in many quarters that a programme dominated by large-scale meetings would be the most effective way to operate a home-mission campaign. This was not the only legacy which Moody and Sankey left Scotland.

Much of the success which Moody and Sankey encountered was a result of the theology they preached. In contrast to the kind of preaching Scots were familiar with, Moody and Sankey offered a far more inclusive, emotional religion. It was their preaching style, more than anything else, which ordinary people found so attractive about the two Americans. It was only to be expected that ministers, particularly the younger ministers and students who had been so eager to help Moody and Sankey, preferred to follow the theological example set by the Americans rather than their older Scottish colleagues. Such a development also had serious implications for home-mission work. For all its faults, old style Calvinism had encouraged aggressive missionary work. If the choice was between heaven and hell, it was important that people were made familiar with God's message. In contrast, Arminian teaching placed the emphasis

firmly on each individual's choice as to whether or not to believe God's message and thereby guarantee their place in eternity. In many ways this should have encouraged missionary programmes aimed at producing mass conversions, but as we shall see this was rarely the case. It would be a gross exaggeration to suggest that Moody and Sankey's impact upon Scotland heralded the end for Calvinism however. Within the Free Church, a small, increasingly marginalised group, largely based in the Highlands, clung to Calvinism and refused to entertain any move by the Church which would distance itself from its traditional theological outlook.

Moody and Sankey's impact upon Scotland was not restricted to theology however. Since the early eighteenth century, denominational rivalry had been an integral aspect of relations between the largest Churches in Scotland. In contrast, Moody and Sankey had stressed that God's message was more important than any petty denominational rivalry. Consequently, they were able to encourage an unprecedented level of cooperation among Churches which had spent much of the previous thirty years quarrelling amongst themselves. Moody and Sankey had shown the Scottish Churches just how much they had in common and this was particularly evident in relations between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches. Shortly after the Americans had left the country, Robert Rainy, the new unofficial leader of the Free Church, negotiated an informal alliance with the United Presbyterians over disestablishment. It had been apparent for some time that there was a good deal of common ground between the two denominations, but the desire for union was unquestionably encouraged by the ecumenical spirit which Moody and Sankey had fostered after their arrival in Scotland. The alliance with the United Presbyterians was also an indication of a growing trend within the Free Church: namely, an increasing desire to see the denomination as a gathered Church of true believers in contrast to a national Church which had a responsibility to place ordinances before the

entire population. This new ideology had important ramifications for the Free Church's territorial programme. As long as the Free Church saw itself as a National Church, it followed that the denomination had a responsibility to place ordinances before the entire population, or at least attempt to. If it was a gathered Church, the denomination only had a responsibility to its own members. The adoption of another church-extension programme by the Free Church in 1877 showed that the question of who the Church had a responsibility towards was rarely as simple as it seemed. Nevertheless, as the Free Church entered the last quarter of the century it appeared to be a denomination which was alive with contradictions and internal divisions. Traditional Calvinism against Arminian teaching, those in favour and those against union with the United Presbyterians; and those who felt that the denomination should continue to undertake missionary work against those who felt that such a policy was no longer appropriate for what was ostensibly a gathered Church of true believers. The next chapter will explore these tensions within the Free Church as the denomination struggled to find a distinctive role which would distinguish it from every other Church in Scotland.

CHAPTER SIX

THE CALM AFTER THE STORM, 1879-1888

As we have seen, the subject of lapsing from both church attendance and membership was explored in some depth by the Free Church's Home Mission Committee in the early 1870s. A belief that the likelihood of lapsing was increased by rural-to-urban migration had been for some time a cause of concern amongst most Church leaders. But that does not explain why the Free Church waited so long before it investigated the problem thoroughly and adopted measures which were designed to reduce the likelihood of lapsing. In an effort to reduce lapsing, the Free Church General Assembly adopted a new plan in 1871. When a member of a congregation was to move, his or her minister was to write to the nearest Free Church minister in the district to which their member was moving. This minister was then to visit the new arrival and invite him or her to the local church. It soon emerged that this plan was only really effective for people moving to rural areas. Individuals who left a congregation to work seasonally or settle permanently in a rural area were more likely to know where they were going to live and who they would be working for, which meant that they could be contacted easily. This was not the case with people who left the countryside to live in large towns, and it was people in this category who were most likely to stop attending church. Many of those leaving the countryside for large towns were unlikely to know where they were going to live until they had actually arrived in the city. Even if they did know where they were going to live, the high level of geographical mobility in towns and cities made any plan to keep track of people extremely difficult to implement. It was also difficult to deny that ministers in large centres of population had enough to occupy their energies without spending valuable time looking for lapsed adherents from rural

districts.

Consequently, the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals asked the General Assembly in 1878 to investigate what more could be done for those who left the countryside to live in towns and cities.[1] William Blaikie, the Home Mission Committee's convener, expressed the view of many ministers when he complained that it was easier for a minister to provide pastoral superintendence for a rural than an urban population. To Blaikie, the prevailing lack of interest in religion in cities resulted from the fact that many people were more interested in their worldly status than in the afterlife.[2] This materialism was a particularly modern condition, and one which Blaikie felt influenced the Churches. "If we wish to get men to believe in something more than they can see or touch, the best way is to show that we believe in more than we can see or touch."[3] In many ways Blaikie was absolutely right. Although the Free Church had adopted a plan to reduce the likelihood of lapsing, it was more often than not ignored by ministers and kirk-sessions.

People from rural areas flocked to Glasgow more than to any other city, and the Free Presbytery of Glasgow undertook an investigation at the beginning of 1879 in order to ascertain what experience each minister had of lapsing.[4] On the whole the returns blamed lapsing on those who arrived in the city from the countryside. In particular, ministers felt it was regrettable that so many incomers did not know anybody who could introduce them to a local church. More revealing was the fact that many ministers blamed poverty as a major cause of non-churchgoing.[5] Previously, most ministers had been happy to blame lapsing on rural migrants having fallen into a moral abyss after they had entered a city. The fact that ministers were prepared to admit in the late 1870s that poverty in

1 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1878) Appendix xx p.6.
2 Ibid., pp.153-155.
3 Ibid., p.155.
4 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record,* (April 1,1879) p.83.
5 Ibid.

itself could lead to non-churchgoing represented a significant change in direction and outlook.

From the ministerial returns to the presbytery it appeared that some ministers in rural areas had been assiduous in alerting ministers in Glasgow about when to look out for new arrivals. However, the majority of their colleagues in the countryside had been less than zealous in keeping their Glasgow counterparts up-to-date about Free Church members who had moved to the city. This was extremely disappointing as the few ministers who had responded to the certificates they had been sent had enjoyed some success in encouraging newcomers to attend a local church.[6] Such ministerial lethargy was clearly worrying considering that the agricultural depression was continuing to drive more and more people into towns and cities. No wonder Alex Mackenzie, the convener of the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals, felt that: "There must be more spiritual activity among the members of our congregations. Our Churches must be composed of working bees, and not drones."[7]

The Presbytery of Glasgow was so alarmed by the findings of its investigation that it introduced the subject of lapsing to the General Assembly in 1879. In response, the Home Mission Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to investigate the problem and prepare a report on "The Lapsing of Members and Adherents from connection with the Church."[8] In an effort to determine the prevalence of lapsing, the Sub-Committee sent a questionnaire to every Free Church minister in the Lowlands. The returns which were received from this investigation gave the Committee a comprehensive picture of the nature and extent of lapsing. The fact that two-thirds of ministers made no reply to the Committee, however, revealed how many ministers were seemingly indifferent

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6 Ibid.

7 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1880) Appendix xx p.9.

8 Ibid., Appendix iii p.15.

to the problem of lapsing.[9] No doubt a number of ministers in the rural Lowlands felt that they were free from any blame, but they could still have made a valuable contribution to the debate, particularly by pressuring their urban counterparts on the need to do more for members who left the countryside.

Although some ministers had implemented the regulations adopted in 1871 in relation to lapsing, the report concluded that the vast majority of ministers had neglected the rules. Even more ominously, a number of ministers claimed that they had never heard of the measures adopted by the Assembly in 1871.[10] In total, seventy ministerial returns claimed that the rules to prevent lapsing were satisfactory, fifteen said that they were unsatisfactory, one hundred were indefinite, and twenty-four complained about the lack of cooperation from colleagues.[11] It is difficult to imagine a more damning indictment for the system than for one return to conclude that it had been "useless."[12]

As with the Presbytery of Glasgow's investigation, the report by the General Assembly's Committee concluded that lapsing was most prevalent in large towns and cities.[13] Ministers in urban areas had been quick to point out to the Committee that many people who had been communicants in rural areas had fallen into a "state of practical heathenism" after they entered a large town or city.[14] When no move from rural areas to towns was involved, lapsing remained relatively rare, but ministers felt when it did happen that the problem was due to poverty and kirk-session discipline.[15] Kirk-session discipline, however well intentioned, often appeared to be nothing more than moral censorship; and so it could easily alienate those members of the Church who resented having their conduct scrutinised. Additionally, the Committee felt that

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9 Ibid., Appendix iii a p.1.
10 Ibid., p.2.
11 Ibid., p.3.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., p.4.
14 Ibid., p.5.
15 Ibid., p.6.

poverty reduced people to such a state that they could no longer afford to pay seat rents and had no option but to sell their best Sunday clothing.[16] Naturally, poverty affected the working class more than any other social group, and members of the middle class tended to dominate kirk-session membership. It was clear, therefore, that these two elements could easily alienate those disadvantaged groups in society who felt that the Church was putting them on trial because of their economic position. If a combination of the prejudices of middle-class office-bearers and poverty were significant causes of non-churchgoing, it was also evident from the report that the problem could not be blamed on one single factor. After studying the report, Alexander Bruce, the Professor of Apologetics at the Free Trinity College Glasgow, told the Assembly in 1880 that non-churchgoing could be blamed on:

> *Lax discipline in other denominations, neglect of visitation, the uninteresting and unimpressive character of the church services, keeping up of certificates by ministers when members go to reside in other localities,* and *the effect of extra church services...*[17]

In order to make the duplicate certificate more effective, the Presbytery of Dunoon recommended including a printed form of intimation so that a minister could be notified when a church member was about to settle in their district. The Presbytery of Dunoon felt that this would complete the existing duplicate certificate and as it was already included in the adherent's certificate, the presbytery could see no reason why it could not also be introduced to the membership certificate.[18] This plan had already been introduced with some success by the Church of Scotland. But like other measures to prevent lapsing, it was clear that this plan would be most successful in rural areas. In the case of those going to live in towns and cities, the form would have to be sent to an organisation which had been established specifically to look out for new arrivals.

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16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

The Established Church had got round this problem by forming strangers' committees in the largest towns and cities whose members were expected to visit each new arrival to the city and invite them to a local church.[19]

These plans had potential, but it was difficult to see whether anything could be done to prevent lapsing if an individual church member was determined to stop attending church. Similarly, if ministers chose to ignore the new plans, the Church was certainly not blameless, as James Wells, the Home Mission Committee's joint convener, pointed out: "We do a wrong to these when we think of them as 'lapsed,' 'aliens,' and 'outcasts'. In many a case it was the Church that lapsed first, and a restored Church might soon win them back."[20] Despite having had two years to consider the aforementioned recommendations, only fourteen of the Free Church's presbyteries and eighteen kirk-sessions replied to the Committee's investigation. Lapsing was a chronic problem in towns and cities more than anywhere else, and so it was particularly hard to understand why only the Presbytery of Glasgow (of the largest presbyteries) replied to the Sub-Committee's queries.[21] Those presbyteries which did reply gave their general support to the alterations to the membership certificate and the introduction of strangers' committees. Nonetheless, after such a disappointing response, the Sub-Committee had no choice than to ask the presbyteries to consider the recommendations once again in the hope that they would take the issue more seriously the second time around.[22]

In the following year, the presbyteries did give the subject the attention it deserved, and so the Sub-Committee was able to tell the General Assembly in 1883 that forty-six presbyteries had approved, to a greater or lesser extent, the recommendations to prevent lapsing.[23] With typical enthusiasm, the Presbytery

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19 Ibid.

20 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record*, (April 1,1881) p.87.

21 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1882) Appendix iii p.21.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., (1883) Appendix iii pp.20-22.

of Glasgow had immediately appointed a strangers' committee and its success seemed to indicate that the introduction of strangers' committees could help to prevent lapsing in a number of towns and cities throughout the country. In a single year, the strangers' committee in Glasgow had been involved in looking into the cases of one hundred individuals who had moved to the city. The Committee first found where each of these individuals lived, then assigned to each a member of the Committee who paid them a visit and invited them to a local Free church.[24] This visitation scheme evidently prevented a number of people from lapsing, and (the Free Church was particularly pleased to note) also prevented them from joining a Church of Scotland congregation. Of course, Glasgow was an exceptional case given the size of its population and their level of mobility. Consequently, the Glasgow strangers' committee had been forced to address the fact that a number of people seemed to disappear without trace upon entering the city. In order to find out what had happened to such individuals, the strangers' committee sent a schedule to every Free Church minister in the city. Between 1882-1883 the strangers' committee was able to discover what had happened to one hundred former members of the Church who had not been contacted after they entered Glasgow. After investigating each case, the strangers' committee discovered that a sixth of them were on the rolls of other denominations in the city.[25] This indicated that not everybody who entered the city drifted away from the church. It is important to bear in mind, however, that although the strangers' committee enjoyed some success, it only managed to reach a tiny proportion of those who entered Glasgow each year.

The Free Church's preoccupation with the problem of lapsing in the 1870s and 1880s was one of the reasons why less emphasis was placed on aggressive, territorial work. In the 1840s and 1850s the emphasis in the mission field had been firmly placed on those outwith the Church. In the last quarter of the

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24 Ibid., (1884) p.55.

25 Ibid.

century, however, the Free Church became more concerned with retaining those members it already had instead of looking to reach those outside organised religion. The evidence gathered by the Free Church indicated that lapsing was likely to coincide with a change in an individual's circumstances, particularly when he or she relocated to a large town or city. This led the Free Church to believe that the problem could be contained if a plan could be formulated which would keep a close eye on those who moved to cities from rural areas. The Free Church initially erred in believing that lapsing should be addressed by requiring a great deal of correspondence between already overburdened individual ministers. The strangers' committees subsequently seemed to offer greater possibilities in preventing lapsing. Strangers' committees embodied many aspects of the territorial method, introducing a personal and aggressive aspect to the problem of lapsing.

Despite the partial success of the strangers' committees, Moody and Sankey's return visit to Scotland in 1881-1882 was another factor which created despondency among the Churches in the early 1880s. Essentially, Moody and Sankey failed to bring about the kind of revival which had characterised their first visit to the country in 1873-1874. This is not to suggest that no area of the country was blessed with signs of a spiritual awakening. During their stay in Edinburgh between 23 November 1881 and 20 January 1882, the two Americans were closely connected to the Free Church and held daily prayer meetings and afternoon women's meetings at the Free Assembly Hall. The two evangelists also held regular meetings at the Corn Exchange in the Grassmarket.[26] Despite the superficial success of these services, they did not generate a major revival in the city.

After spending two months in Edinburgh, Moody and Sankey went to Glasgow where they began their campaign on 26 January 1882. Before they

26 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1882) Appendix xx p.11.

arrived in Glasgow a meeting had been held at the Christian Institute for 400 ministers and office-bearers who were interested in helping Moody and Sankey.[27] The United Evangelistic Association, which had been formed at the time of their first visit to the city in 1874, organised Moody and Sankey's meetings and undertook the cost of their second campaign. The U.E.A rented the St. Andrews' hall which was one of the largest venues in the city with accommodation for 4,000 people. Each Sunday during their stay in Glasgow Moody and Sankey held three well attended services at the St. Andrews' hall. The Association also leased a building in Ingram Street where the two evangelists held a number of successful services, particularly in connection with Gospel Temperance meetings.[28] Further, they conducted special meetings for businessmen at the St. George's church in Buchanan Street. In addition to these large organised meetings, the city was divided into twelve mission districts. Each territory thereafter received a fortnight of Moody and Sankey's undivided evangelistic attention which included week-day evening services in the local Presbyterian churches.[29] This reflected Moody and Sankey's new belief that their work would would fail to produce long-term success unless they concentrated on the territorial principle. Although Moody and Sankey failed to stir the imagination of Glasgow's inhabitants in the way they had in 1874, the U.E.A boasted that it had the names and addresses of thousands of people who claimed that they had been converted during their second spell in Glasgow.[30]

The presbyteries of Orkney, Selkirk, Irvine and Fordyce, Deer, Duns and Chirnside also claimed that they had experienced revivals during 1881-1882. Nevertheless, there could be no disputing the fact that the revival had failed to generate the kind of enthusiasm which was associated with the awakenings between 1859-1862 and 1873-1874. In many ways it was always unlikely that

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27 Ibid., p.9.
28 Ibid., pp.9-10.
29 Ibid., p.8.
30 Ibid., p.10.

Moody and Sankey could rekindle the fire which had been ignited eight years previously. This was not something which ministers at the time could have known, however, and the relative failure of Moody and Sankey during their second spell in Scotland proved an enormous disappointment. After all, the country was in the grip of a severe economic depression and economic depression, although hardly welcome, had in the past encouraged spiritual awakenings. Similarly, the ecclesiastical divisions and theological controversies which had contributed to the Moody and Sankey revival in 1873-1874, had arguably become even more deep rooted in the early 1880s. Perhaps the Scottish people had become disillusioned after having experienced two momentous revivals between 1859-1862 and 1873-1874. These revivals had failed to regenerate Scottish society as many ministers and church members had hoped they would. A revival fatigue ensured that by the time of the second Moody and Sankey visit to Scotland, few people still believed that a revival could achieve a long-term solution to the country's social, religious and economic problems.

The prolonged economic depression did little to help Moody and Sankey's work in Scotland, and also made it difficult for the Free Church to carry out its church-extension campaign. Falling building costs certainly enabled the Free Church to build more churches with the money it raised. But it was difficult for any denomination to justify spending money on church extension when so many people were suffering the effects of the depression. Likewise, it was hard to persuade unemployed workers and failed businessmen to contribute towards a church-extension campaign, particularly when the Free Church had yet to prove that demand exceeded the existing church supply. Regardless of these difficulties, however, a number of people within the Free Church were convinced that the trade depression and the centenary of Chalmers' birth in 1880 called for the renewed application of the territorial system. Referring to Chalmers' centenary, John Adam, the Home Mission Committee's convener, argued that: "Surely we

shall best show our appreciation of him, we shall do most honour to his memory, by following here in his footsteps, and seeking to make our beloved Scotland morally and spiritually what he never ceased to labour that it might, and to hope that it would yet, become."[31]

Although Adam tried to use the centenary of Chalmers' birth to reassert the territorial system, he also recognised that there was some opposition within the Free Church to church extension. In 1883, for example, the Free Synod of Fife and the Synod of Perth and Stirling submitted an overture to the Assembly which asked the Church to avoid creating too many dependent charges.[32] In response, the General Assembly appointed a Sub-Committee of the Home Mission Committee to investigate how church extension could be pursued without creating a number of financially weak charges. During this investigation, the Sub-Committee consulted Presbyterian Churches in America and Non-Conformist Churches in England to discover how they approached church extension - although they received no practical guidance relevant to conditions in Scotland.[33] The returns from the Free Church's own presbyteries, however, contained a good deal of valuable information. These presbytery returns reflected the Free Church's increasing perception of itself as a gathered Church of true believers, rather than a national Church with a responsibility for the entire population. Many presbyteries, including the Presbytery of Aberdeen, suggested that several small churches within close proximity of each other might be united under a single minister. Similarly, the Presbyteries of Dundee, Glasgow and Aberdeen felt that the Free Church would benefit by closing down some small congregations so that ministers could be moved to areas where there was a genuine demand.[34] Previously, the Free Church had supported small congregations and tried to generate a demand for religion, but in the early 1880s

31 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record*, (July 1,1880) p.173.
32 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1883) p.73.
33 Ibid., (1884) Appendix iii p.22.
34 Ibid., p.24.

such a policy no longer seemed desirable to some of the more hard-pressed presbyteries.

It was only six years since the Free Church had embarked upon a major church-extension programme, but a large section of the Church had come to the conclusion that the Free Church needed to reduce its number of charges instead of creating additional ones. It was certainly questionable whether the Free Church required more churches in an age when public transport could readily move people to where churches were available. Likewise, the level of geographic mobility in towns and cities made it increasingly difficult to implement an effective territorial ideal. This was something which Mr Iverarch, a speaker at the Assembly in 1884, recognised: "There was a time when they could meet the needs of the population by their old parochial organisation, when the Church did exercise some effective sort of supervision over all the people in the district. That time had long gone by."[35]

After forty years in the mission field it was perhaps not surprising that many within the Free Church had become despondent at how their missionary efforts had made so little impact upon religious indifference and social misery. Yet for others this backsliding by the Church was actually part of the problem. James Wells, the Home Mission Committee's joint convener, felt that the Free Church's missionary programme had been weakened due to "evangelical moderatism. Thus we grow not anti-missionary, but non-missionary; hope of the hopeless decays; fruitful practical impulses forsake us; and aggressive zeal cools down into languor and conventional mediocrity."[36] But by the 1880s it appeared naive to believe that the country's or indeed the Church's problems could be solved by simply more evangelization. Still, it remained difficult to see that there was any alternative to territorialism if the Free Church was determined to remain in the mission field. If the Free Church withdrew from its

35 Ibid., p.80.

36 Ibid., (1885) p.84.

domestic, evangelistic programme, it would be admitting defeat. Thus, although a number of people within the Free Church doubted the wisdom of church extension and aggressive territorialism, they rarely expressed their disgruntlement publicly. Many no doubt were unwilling to be held up as examples of "evangelical moderatism." Consequently, committed territorialists were able to press their will upon the Free Church. Under their influence, the General Assembly concluded in 1886 that the condition of cities, towns, mining and manufacturing areas, called for the "extended application of the territorial system."[37] It was a rallying call which often fell upon deaf ears, as many of those involved in mission work at the grass-roots level felt Moody and Sankey's revivalist approach was the best way to conduct a missionary programme.

The desire for repeated church-extension programmes was a phenomenon which was not restricted to the Free Church. In 1888, the United Presbyterian Synod appointed a Committee on Church Extension and instructed it to formulate a church-extension plan. In the following year the Committee's ten Sub-Committees travelled throughout the country in order to find out where churches were most needed.[38] The fund (which hoped to raise £20,000) was considerably less ambitious than the Free Church's, but it did indicate the continued commitment to church extension among Scottish Churches, fuelled by denominational rivalry.

The continued failure of its congregational mission class of stations, despite their colossal expense, was one of the biggest problems that the Free Church's home-mission programme encountered. During 1879, the Home Mission Committee subsidised 100 congregational missions at a cost of £2,507. In effect, this meant that the Committee spent all but £800 of its annual collection on a class of stations which had yet to prove their value in the mission field.[39]

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37 *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1886) p.456.

38 *Proceedings of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church*, (1888) Appendix v pp.423-424.

39 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1879) Appendix iii p.17.

To its credit, the Home Mission Committee recognised that this expenditure was excessive and endeavoured to discourage further efforts by introducing a waiting list for those congregations which wanted to undertake a congregational mission.[40] Unsatisfactory supervision from both presbyteries and 'parent' congregations continued to be the main reason for the failure of congregational missions, despite regular appeals by the Home Mission Committee. Thus, in most cases, the student, probationer or catechist in charge of a congregational mission was left to struggle by himself.

As a result of the financial problems caused by the congregational missions, the Home Mission Committee appointed a Sub-Committee in 1879 in order to investigate all aspects of the Committee's finances. In its report, the Sub-Committee recommended that the Committee should set strict limits on its annual expenditure on congregational missions, and that no more than £1,500 be spent on congregational missions each year.[41] The debate between those who favoured the congregational mission plan and the supporters of the territorial method reflected the continued uncertainty within the Free Church over precisely what the denomination's role should be after it ceased regarding itself as a national Church with a responsibility to provide ordinances for the entire population. From the outset, congregational missions had been intended for existing Free Church adherents. Further, congregational missions were not intended to develop into independent sanctioned territorial charges.

In one respect, territorial missions had an enormous advantage over congregational missions. Most territorial missions began with no members or adherents. It was easy to gauge how well they were doing, simply by counting the number of members, and or, regular worshippers. In addition, territorial missions had an evangelistic role which enabled supporters of aggressive territorialism to claim that they were making inroads upon those outwith the

40 Ibid., p.40.

41 Ibid., (1880) Appendix iii pp.19-20.

Church. Each minister or missionary attached to a territorial congregation also had a seemingly endless supply of anecdotes concerning successful converts who had been rescued from the depths of social depravity and who had subsequently become respectable, employable members of society. Thus, territorial missions were not only essential to the religious wellbeing of the country, but they appeared to have an important social function. This last aspect was given added significance during the 1880s when the first cracks in Britain's world economic pre-eminence became evident. Perhaps not surprisingly a conference of the Evangelistic Association in Glasgow in 1882 concluded that the territorial system was the most effective method for home mission.[42]

On the surface, the nature of population movement in large towns and cities during the 1880s gave territorialism a new relevance. In general, before 1870, the different social classes, regardless of their position on the social ladder, had lived within close proximity of each other in the city centres. From 1870, however, local authorities began demolishing some of the most overcrowded and dangerous city-centre housing. This intervention was long overdue, but the combined failure of local authorities and private building firms to build replacement housing meant that working-class overcrowding was simply shifted elsewhere. It was not long before property developers noticed the potential for building housing in the suburbs from where people could commute to work by means of an increasingly efficient public-transport system. Unfortunately, suburban house building was aimed at the middle class and labour aristocracy and did little for the poorest inhabitants. Property development in suburban areas left the Churches with two options. They could either build new churches in the suburbs or they could hope that suburban dwellers would be willing to commute back into the city centres to attend church on Sundays. Perhaps wisely, the Free Church chose to build churches in many suburban areas.

The district of Mayfield to the south of Edinburgh was one of the first areas

42 Ibid., (1882) p.154.

to experience this kind of property development. For most of the nineteenth century, Mayfield had been isolated from the rest of the city to the north, while to the south of the district there had been nothing but woodland. At the time that Mayfield consisted of only 250 houses, the one church in the area - a United Presbyterian church at Duncan Street - offered sufficient church accommodation for the area's religious needs.[43] The nature of the district changed dramatically from 1870, however, after the proprietor, Duncan Maclaren, a former Lord Provost of Edinburgh, decided to feu his land to the south of Mayfield Loan and Grange Loan.[44] This decision enabled building companies to exploit the area's potential for suburban housing, mainly for middle-class housing. The new housing brought a large influx of people into Mayfield. In response, the Free and Established Churches soon decided that their churches at Hope Park were too close to the city for a population which was continually expanding southwards.[45] The Churches decided to erect new churches for those who had settled in the developing district. The Established Church first erected an iron church at Craigmillar Park, and this congregation subsequently formed the backbone of the Mayfield parish church.[46] The Church of Scotland thus guaranteed its presence in the area.

Free Church members, meanwhile, held a public meeting in 1875 at the Clare Hall in Minto Street to discuss how the Free Church could make its presence felt in the area. This meeting appointed a Committee (consisting of forty heads of families) and instructed it to petition the Presbytery of Edinburgh for permission to establish a preaching station in the area.[47] In response, the presbytery agreed to a Mayfield Free Church mission and it managed to attract an attendance of fifty to its first service at a school in Minto Street on 9 May 1875.

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43 *Mayfield United Free Church: 1875-1925* (Edinburgh,1925), p.5.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 J.A.R. Moffat, *Mayfield 100: 1875-1975* (Edinburgh,1975).

William Blaikie juggled his professorial responsibilities at New College and became the station's main preacher. Blaikie also used his considerable influence to attract other quality preachers, such as James Wilson and Principal Cairns, to the station. Although the preaching station had to compete with the existing Free, Established and United Presbyterian churches at nearby Newington, the congregation enjoyed initial success and the mission's organisers purchased a site in West Mayfield on which they built a hall for the infant congregation. The General Assembly agreed to sanction the station in 1876.[48] This decision enabled the congregation to call James Stuart of Kelso and he was inducted as minister of the Free Mayfield church on 23 January 1877. The congregation's new hall was opened shortly before Stuart's ordination and 178 of its 200 seats were immediately let by the relatively prosperous suburban dwellers.[49] With so much of its accommodation already claimed, it was clear that the size of the hall would soon be inadequate. Thus, in 1877, the congregation agreed to build a church with accommodation for between 750 and 800 people. The new Mayfield Free church was finally opened on 30 May 1879 at a cost of £5,200.[50] Supported by the affluent middle class, the fledgling congregation enjoyed a startling rate of progress which was typical of many new suburban congregations.

The fact that new suburban congregations were generally successful within a short space of time vindicated the Free Church and other Churches in their decision to follow the middle-class population movement to the suburbs. None of the Churches could afford to overlook suburban needs and thereby lose the support of the affluent middle class. At first sight the success enjoyed by new suburban congregations like the Free Church congregations at Mayfield and Warrender Park appeared to to be the result of old-fashioned, aggressive territorialism. In reality, few of these suburban congregations were particularly aggressive or territorial in their outreach. The Mayfield congregation, for

48 *Mayfield United Free Church: 1875-1925*, pp.6-7.

49 Ibid., p.7.

50 Ibid., p.8.

example, was responsible for mission work some distance away at Buccleuch Street and in the High Street, although neither of these missions was intended to develop into a sanctioned charge.[51] This did not stop Church leaders from describing the suburban charges as shining examples of the territorial system however. In truth, the new suburban churches were undermining the territorial system. In general, it was the wealthiest members of the community who withdrew to the suburbs. While their money enabled new suburban congregations to become successful and established almost overnight, the fact that the suburban dwellers were no longer contributing to support city-centre churches meant that those congregations were in danger of ceasing to be self-supporting. This was particularly alarming in the Free Church given the denomination's increasing tendency to justify the existence of a congregation in terms of whether or not it was profitable.

While the middle class were looking to resettle in areas like Mayfield and Warrender Park, which reflected their own standing in the community, property developers did not overlook the needs of the labour aristocracy who were also keen to move out of city centres to new largely tenement housing in suburban districts. In many cases, this new housing was built alongside industries which had settled in the suburbs because of the lack of affordable or available land within town centres. The district of Gorgie to the west of Edinburgh reflected this trend. For most of the nineteenth century Gorgie had remained nothing more than a village whose inhabitants were still largely employed in farming. But in the last quarter of the century local landowners began to feu their land which enabled industry to settle in the district and property developers to build

51 Ibid., p.12.

predominantly tenement housing in the area.[52] From 1843, the Free Church had never felt the need to erect a church in Gorgie, although the Free Morningside congregation later established a mission and sabbath school in the area under the superintendence of John Wilkie.[53] After the sabbath school had met, adults occupied the hall to listen to ministers from the city, including James Wilson, the minister at the Free Barclay church, who was later to take a particularly keen interest in the district.[54]

While Gorgie remained largely rural it was difficult for the Free Church to justify establishing a church in the area. After mid-century, however, it became clear that the number of people who were settling in the district would soon exhaust the mission hall's accommodation. With Gorgie being rapidly developed, the mission's organisers were fortunate that the laird of the area, Mr Cox, offered them a site at the nominal feu duty of £2,2s on which to build a small church with accommodation for 250 people.[55] James Hood Wilson, with his usual enthusiasm for home mission, worked tirelessly to raise money for the church. The Gorgie mission was opened as a territorial mission station in October 1882 under the oversight of a probationer, William Kilpatrick.[56] Although the congregation had an impressive range of agencies - sabbath schools, Bible Classes, Band of Hope, library, Boys' Brigade, popular lectures and mothers' meetings - the fact that only twenty-three people attended the station's first communion in 1888 showed that the area required aggressive mission work.[57] The Barclay congregation, which had taken over the running of the

52 The decision to establish a mission station in Gorgie showed how certain people understood that the Church had to act before large-scale population movement took place. The area was so thinly populated that even a move to the area by a football team in the 1880s was deemed risky. When Heart of Midlothian Football Club relocated from Powderhall in the north-east of the city to the Gorgie and Dalry area, the club decided to experiment with half price admission following complaints from supporters that the new ground was too far away from the city centre. A. Mackie, *The Hearts* (London,1959).

53 D.T. Lyon, *Memorials of Gorgie Mission and Free Church to the year 1899* (Edinburgh,1899), p.9.

54 Ibid., p.10.

55 Ibid., p.16.

56 Ibid., pp.18-19.

57 Ibid., p.20.

Gorgie mission, decided in 1888 not to have seat rents at the station.[58] This encouraged the poorest people in the area to attend the mission and before long the congregation had outgrown its humble accommodation.

Although the station's organisers were disappointed not to receive a legacy of £5,000 which the successful builder, James Smith, had left for a church in a needy area in Edinburgh (the money went to Parsons Green instead), the General Assembly agreed to sanction the mission in 1891 and William Kilpatrick was soon ordained as the Gorgie Free church's first minister. The Gorgie Free church had progressed so well that the Barclay congregation decided in April 1882 that their oversight of the church was no longer needed.[59] In Gorgie, the policy of having a territorial mission overseen by an already established congregation had proved a resounding success.

There was a similar situation in the east of the city at Easter Road. At a meeting of the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh on 5 November 1879 a Church-Extension Report was submitted which included an application by John Pirie to start a territorial mission on Easter Road and Albert Street.[60] As we have seen, Pirie had been the minister during the 1850s at the New North congregation's Cowgate territorial mission. The Cowgate station was sanctioned by the General Assembly in 1859, and Pirie remained at the church until 1877 when he left to become a Presbyterian minister in Norwich. However, Pirie resigned after only two years in England and came back to Edinburgh. Having failed to find a city-centre charge in the capital, Pirie turned his attention to the suburban and semi-rural area in and around Easter Road.[61] This district had traditionally been a rural buffer-zone between Edinburgh and Leith. But the demand for housing had proved so great in both towns that property developers had erected predominantly tenement housing in the district. The presbytery approved Pirie's

58 Ibid., pp.20-21.

59 Ibid., p.22.

60 *Guthrie Memorial Church, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh,1931), p.3.

61 Ibid., p.5.

suggestion for a new charge and provided him with the largest available territorial grant. Pirie was able to bring his vast experience in the mission field to bear upon the area, and before long the congregation had developed to such an extent that the Assembly agreed to sanction it in 1880. This enabled the congregation to call Pirie and he was ordained as their first minister in April 1881. The congregation's new Guthrie Memorial church on Easter Road was opened at a cost of £4,000 on 21 December 1881.[62] More than anything else, Pirie built up his congregation by regular house-to-house visiting. No fewer than 207 people were attracted to the congregation during 1881, none of whom the mission's organisers claimed had been drawn from other congregations in the city.[63] Similarly, 146 people attended its first communion service on the last Sunday of April 1881. The congregation could also boast two sabbath schools with 250 pupils who were taught by members of the congregation.[64] Pirie remained at the Guthrie Memorial church until his death on 4 January 1894. After his death, Pirie's successor, Adam St Clair Sutherland, carried on the territorial work at the Guthrie Memorial church, and by the close of the century the congregation could boast 700 members.[65] Pirie's decision to establish a territorial congregation in the Easter Road area had been completely vindicated.

There was certainly an interesting contrast where new middle-class and working-class congregations were concerned. Those responsible for middle-class congregations like Mayfield and Warrender Park claimed their success was a victory for the territorial system. But there was no way they could have been described as aggressive in the sense that Chalmers would have understood. On the contrary, they operated on the attractive principle. Although it is possible that the middle class might have resented the kind of house-to-house visiting which had traditionally been aimed at the working class, it was more the case

62 Ibid., pp.4-6.
63 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record*, (Jan 2,1882) p.17.
64 Ibid., (June 1,1881) p.142.
65 *Guthrie Memorial Church, Edinburgh*, pp.9-12.

that aggressive territorialism was unnecessary in these areas. Build a church in a middle-class district and there seemed to be little difficulty in attracting people. However, aggressive territorialism was still regarded as an essential accompaniment to church building in new working-class districts. It was the labour aristocracy who were moving to areas like Gorgie and Easter Road: and they were precisely the people who had previously formed the backbone of territorial congregations in Old Town areas. They were only too willing to implement the tactics they had used in Old Town areas in the rapidly expanding suburbs.

This kind of population movement had important implications for the Church's missionary programme. Throughout the century, towns and cities had remained relatively small, albeit densely populated physical structures in which the classes had tended to live within close proximity of each other. Thus, the Free Church had hoped since Chalmers' time at the West Port, that the middle class would be willing to provide their time and perhaps more importantly their money to enable territorial missions to get off the ground. The Free Church had been convinced that territorialism could actually encourage sympathy and understanding between the classes. In theory at least, the middle class would become sympathetic to the working class, having come into close contact with their suffering, and the working class would in turn be grateful to the middle class for the compassion they had demonstrated. When the middle and working classes had lived within the same districts, it was possible to argue that there was something like a shared urban experience. Similarly, regardless of how patronising it might have seemed, many members of the middle class had been encouraged to undertake personally or help to finance territorial work because of the scenes which they had witnessed in neighbouring working-class districts. But residential segregation was creating a situation in which the classes rarely came into contact with each other. To make matters worse, as people moved to the

suburbs, they tended to forget those who had been left behind. The middle class preferred to spend money on grand new churches in the suburbs to serve their own religious needs rather than to finance missionary programmes in Old Town areas.

It is important not to exaggerate the level of residential segregation (most middle-class districts continued to contain small working-class communities and vice versa), but residential segregation appeared to be a seemingly irreversible trend.[66] Nobody could blame the middle class or the labour aristocracy for wanting to live in housing which reflected their status and aspirations. Their desire to live alongside members of the same social group, however, was creating a society increasingly divided along class lines.

Throughout the nineteenth century ministers had been despondent when they compared the class divisions in towns and cities to the relative stability in rural areas. In explaining why the social structure remained more cohesive in rural areas many ministers insisted that it was because the parish system still operated effectively in the countryside. Like nineteenth-century Scottish novelists, ministers had a tendency to romanticise rural society, but it was still generally the case in the countryside that members of the church sat together under the one roof irrespective of their social position.[67] The territorial ministry only broke down in those rural districts which had been transformed as a result of a large population increase. This was particularly evident in mining areas which soon developed a reputation for the uneasy relationship between employers and employees. Although class divisions might not have been as advanced in the countryside as in the large towns, landlords were often despised in rural areas with much the same vehemence as employers were in large towns.

Perhaps the devotion which ministers demonstrated towards the

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66 R.J. Morris, 'Urbanisation in Scotland', in W.H. Fraser and R.J. Morris (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland vol ii 1830-1914* (Edinburgh,1990), pp.73-102.

67 See A. Noble, 'Urbane Silence: Scottish Writing and the Nineteenth Century', in G. Gordon (ed.), *Perspectives of the Scottish City* (Aberdeen, 1985), pp.91-125.

territorial system was predictable given that so many of them had been born in rural areas, and had spent their formative years in districts where the parish system still operated effectively. Similarly, many ministers whose first charges had been in rural areas were shocked when they became ministers in large urban conurbations, and discovered how difficult it was to oversee a crowded district divided along class lines. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that many felt that reproducing the old rural parish system in towns and cities would remove the social divisions which otherwise seemed intractable. After all, the parish system had been an important part of Scottish society for over three hundred years. Of course, the crucial point was that the country's social and economic structure had been radically transformed in the nineteenth century and bore little resemblance to the environment of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The deep class divisions within Scottish society were reflected in the country's political environment during the 1880s. Since the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832 those members of the working class who had been able to vote had generally cast their vote for the Liberal party.[68] Disraeli tried hard to show that the working class were naturally conservative and deferential. In Scotland, however, the working class firmly believed that Gladstone's Liberal party best reflected their beliefs and aspirations. The strength of Liberalism in Scotland was one reason for the failure of Chartism and the instability of such working-class organisations as trade unions. However, while the Liberal and Conservative parties were keen to attract working-class electoral support, they had consistently proved reluctant to legislate in their favour. This is not to suggest that the Liberal and Conservative parties were indifferent to working-class social conditions, but the social legislation they did introduce rarely went as far as the working class would have liked.

The existing political parties were playing a dangerous game by failing to recognise the needs of the working class. The Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884 led to

68 I.G.C. Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland 1832-1914* (Edinburgh,1986).

a significant increase in the size of the working-class electorate which enabled the working class to voice their grievances with greater weight at elections. While Reform Acts gave the working class increased political muscle, their disenchantment with the existing political parties was advanced by the great depression which plagued the British economy from the mid-1870s until 1896. The Scottish and British economies had experienced trade depressions before, but they had generally been short-lived affairs which did not darken the overall impression of a country that was enjoying economic progress and a rising standard of living. To make matters worse, the trade depression in the last quarter of the century coincided with the phenomenal rise of Britain's industrial competitors such as the United States, Germany and Japan. The great depression not only showed how fragile the global economy was, but it revealed that Britain was not economically invincible.

Like previous economic depressions, the recession during the 1880s brought unemployment and social discontent. In Glasgow the Town Council was forced to conduct special relief operations between 1884-1887 and 1892-1893.[69] This kind of local effort was praiseworthy, but the depression made effective legislation from Parliament even more important. Unfortunately, the Liberal party (the party of government for much of the period) was reluctant to intervene in the economy. The Liberal party's reluctance to intervene to the extent that the socialist groups would have liked was perhaps not surprising given that the party had championed free-trade for most of the century. However, the depression cast serious doubts over whether free trade was the best policy for a Britain that was losing its competitiveness. British governments throughout the nineteenth century had been reluctant to intervene while the country's economy was buoyant, and there was reason to believe that increasing prosperity would eventually trickle down to those at the bottom of the social

69 R.A. Cage, 'The Nature and Extent of Poor Relief', in R.A. Cage (ed.), *The Working Class in Glasgow 1750-1914* (London,1987), p.94.

scale. Although Britain's economy had continued to grow for most of the century, a large section of the population had not benefited from this expanding wealth. If there was an invisible hand guiding the British economy, it appeared to have overlooked the lower elements on the social scale.

The expanding working-class electorate and the trade depression strengthened socialist groups which emerged during the 1880s, such as the Marxist Social Democratic Federation, formed in 1883. Members of this organisation had been influenced by the Marxist critique of religion, but they were by no means typical of Scottish socialists who were generally as religious and ethical as their predecessors had been in the Friends of the People and Chartist organisations. The Scottish socialist, Keir Hardie, embodied these democratic and religious traditions. Hardie had been associated with the Liberal party early in his career, but in the 1880s he came to doubt that the Liberal party was committed to real social reform. Instead, he became convinced that only a working-class party would achieve far-reaching social legislation and with other radicals and socialists, Hardie helped to form the Scottish Labour Party in 1888. It would be another generation before the Labour party made serious inroads at elections, but its formation in the 1880s reflected the turbulence of that decade. Previous working-class organisations like the Chartists had generally campaigned for specifically political reforms in the belief that social justice would follow. After the Political Reform Act of 1884, however, about half the adult males had the vote and the new socialist organisations directed their attacks against what they regarded as the injustices of the free market, while they demanded effective social legislation.[70]

The growth of the Labour party proved a slow process (most working-class

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70 See I. Donachie, C. Harvie and I.S. Woods (eds.), *Forward! Labour Politics in Scotland 1888-1988* (Edinburgh,1988); I.G.C. Hutchison, 'Glasgow Working-class Politics', in R.A. Cage (ed.), *The Working Class in Glasgow 1750-1914*; I.G.C. Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland 1832-1986,* W. Ferguson, *Scotland: 1689 to the Present* (Edinburgh,1990); T.C. Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (London,1986); M. Fry, *Patronage and Principle: A Political History of Modern Scotland* (Aberdeen,1987).

voters remained loyal to the Liberal party), but it had important ramifications for the Churches' missionary programmes. In the past, most ministers had supported social legislation largely because they felt that it would make people more amenable to the Gospel, which was the true source of social improvement. In the 1880s, however, social legislation was being advocated by working-class leaders. The working class were increasingly looking to the State for social salvation in this world, and the vehicle for this change was a political party rather than the Church. The weakness at the national political level of the Scottish Labour Party (and after 1893 of the Independent Labour Party) meant that the working class would have to wait until the next century for extensive social legislation. However, while the Westminster government remained committed to *laissez faire,* local authorities were more prepared to intervene in the economy. In many cases, local-authority intervention proved more effective than central intervention.

As we have seen, Parliament passed a Glasgow City Improvement Act in 1866 which gave the Town Council considerable power to intervene in regulating the city's environment, particularly where housing was concerned. Using the powers of this Act, the Glasgow City Improvement Trust purchased some of the city's most ramshackle housing between 1866-1870, and proceeded to sweep away substantial housing inhabited by 15,425 people between 1871-1874.[71] While the Trust had demolished some of the city's most overcrowded and dangerous housing, however, the Council was reluctant to build replacement housing at the rate payers' expense, which meant that overcrowding simply increased elsewhere in the city. Nor were private building companies able to step into the gap, for the construction industry had been devastated by the depression. This proved embarrassing for the Council. The Council had justified its clearance of slum housing by arguing that private building firms would replace the houses which the Trust had demolished. It was not until the 1880s that the Council

71 R.A. Cage, 'Health in Glasgow', *The Working Class in Glasgow 1750-1914*, p.69.

realised that private building firms were failing to replenish the city's reduced housing stock. This forced the Trust to undertake its own house building programme. Within a few years it had managed to build 2,119 council houses.[72] This was a relatively small number given the need for housing in Glasgow, but the city's authority had at least accepted the principle that it should provide the city's poorer inhabitants with affordable, habitable accommodation.

Although the collapse of the City of Glasgow Bank in 1878 had destroyed much of the middle-classes confidence in urban progress, the Glasgow Council became increasingly interventionist in the 1880s, and this intervention was not restricted to housing.[73] In 1879, the Council opened its first public baths and wash houses, and in 1881 the Council decreed that all patients in the city's hospitals were to be treated free of charge.[74] The Council also undertook the unprecedented step of moving into the entertainment market by establishing a number of music halls and theatres in the city. Further, after 1890, the Town Council encouraged the popularity of sport by providing sporting facilities.[75]

The Glasgow Council's interventionist policies could have been even more far-reaching had it not been for the existence of small, residential burghs outwith the city such as Hillhead, Pollockshields and Govanhill, which were home to many who lived in Glasgow but could afford to commute in from outwith the city. This enabled them to enjoy many of the Council's facilities without having to pay the higher rates of those who lived within the Glasgow Council's boundaries.[76] The increasing popularity of suburban life threatened to reduce significantly the Council's revenue. The Council was not blind to this predicament, and from the 1880s it began a 'Greater Glasgow' campaign with the

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72 Ibid., p.70.

73 I. Maver, 'Politics and Power in the Scottish City: Glasgow Town Council in the Nineteenth Century', in T.M. Devine (ed.), *Scottish Elites* (Edinburgh,1994), p.118.

74 R.A. Cage, 'The Nature and Extent of Poor Relief', *The Working Class in Glasgow 1750-1914*, p.78.

75 Ibid., E. King 'Popular Culture in Glasgow', p.166

76 R.J. Morris, 'Urbanisation and Scotland', *People and Society in Scotland vol. ii 1830-1914*, p.73.

aim of assimilating residential and industrial burghs outwith the city under the jurisdiction of Glasgow's Town Council. All but the most intransigent members of the middle class were brought to accept the logic of the 'Greater Glasgow' campaign, and most of these middle-class districts were assimilated into the city in 1891. The Council had thus extended its authority over an additional 11,861 acres, (although Partick and Govan remained outwith the city's jurisdiction until 1912).[77] After 1891 the Council was able to use its increased revenue in radical and imaginative municipalisation plans. Before long, Glasgow's Town Council became a leading example of efficient municipalisation throughout the western world.[78] Without doubt, the last quarter of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of the kind of active local government which would be a feature of the twentieth century. Nobody could criticise this intervention if it did alleviate Glasgow's social misery, but such intervention seemed to indicate that Churches were becoming increasingly marginalised in terms of their wider role in society.

The Churches' position in society was not only challenged by an ever-expanding State sector. The leisure boom which Scotland experienced in the second half of the century threatened to end the dominance which the Churches had exercised over people's time when they were not working. For most of the nineteenth century, the working-classes leisure time had centred upon church-dominated organisations such as sabbath schools and temperance societies. From 1870, however, with greater regulation of their working hours, less physically exhausting work, and more disposable income, working-class people were able to spend their leisure time in non-church related pursuits, such as cycling, organised football clubs, music halls, tea rooms, theatres and even a short-lived

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77 I. Maver, 'Politics and Power in the Scottish City: Glasgow Town Council in the Nineteenth Century', pp.119-120.

78 See W.H. Fraser, 'From Civic Gospel to Municipal Socialism', in D. Fraser (ed.),*Cities, Class and Communications; Essays in Honour of Asa Briggs* (Hemel Hempstead, 1990), pp.55-80; B. Aspinwall, *Portable Utopia: Glasgow and the United States, 1820-1920* (Aberdeen,1984); T.Hart, 'Urban Growth and Municipal Government: Glasgow in a Comparative Context, 1866-1914', in A. Slaven and D.H. Aldcroft (eds.), *Business, Banking and Urban History* (Edinburgh,1982), pp.193-219.

cricket boom.[79] Moreover, the working class for the first time ever had the kind of disposable income needed to support a leisure market. If nothing else, the expanding leisure market provided people with an alternative to the local pub. The Churches, however, could hardly fail to be alarmed at the way these recreational activities inspired the kind of enthusiasm which Scottish ministers (and even Moody and Sankey on their second visit to Scotland in 1881-1882) had found so difficult to generate.

William Alexander Smith, a Glasgow clothing exporter, was one individual who recognised that the Churches existing activities were inadequate for a population which had an unprecedented number of alternatives. In particular, Smith noticed that sabbath schools found it difficult to retain the interest of boys between the ages of twelve and seventeen, who were being attracted by the variety of new leisure activities outwith the Churches' control.[80] (Nonetheless, it should be noted that the Free Church could still claim to have 17,000 sabbath school teachers and 200,000 pupils throughout the country in 1882).[81] Smith at this time was responsible for a Young Mens' Society which he ran on Sundays at the Free Church College mission on North Woodside Road, Glasgow. From his experience of working with young people he had become convinced that older boys could benefit from a disciplined, militaristic organisation. Despite some initial reluctance from the Free Church, Smith was eventually given permission to form such a quasi-military organisation and so the first Boys' Brigade was established at the North Woodside mission on 4 October 1883. Smith had been right to think that adolescent boys would be attracted to the idea of wearing a uniform and military-style training. Within three years of its formation, forty-four Boys' Brigade companies had been established in Scotland, twenty-five in Glasgow, five in Edinburgh and one in

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79 W.H. Fraser, 'Developments in Leisure', in *People and Society in Scotland vol ii 1830-1914*, pp.236-264.

80 O. Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland* (Edinburgh,1980), pp.56-58

81 T. Brown, *Annals of the Disruption* (Edinburgh,1893), p.722.

Dundee.[82]

The Free Church had acted wisely in recognising that the Churches would have to extend their agencies if they were to compete with an expanding entertainments and leisure market. The Boys' Brigade was also a potentially valuable tool for retaining influence over the young following the creation of the national system of education in 1872. If each territorial congregation could boast a Boys' Brigade company, this would prove a major boon in attracting the young. However, while the Boys' Brigade was providing an attraction for teenage boys, the Churches had as yet failed to cater for the recreational needs of adults. This was particularly alarming given that it was adults who were most likely to be attracted to pursuits outwith the Churches' control and it was their support, including financially, upon which all the Churches depended.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Britain was a highly individualistic society in which self-help, temperance and respectability were the dominant values. An unwavering devotion to them had enabled Britain to become a great economic power. As we have seen in terms of politics, the onset of the great depression challenged these values and a new belief system emerged during the 1880s which viewed society as a collective unit of shared interests. This new vision of society was reflected in the development of a new, social theology.

For a number of years, the small Calvinist group within the Free Church had enjoyed an influence which was disproportionate to its actual size. Between 1880-1900, however, this group became increasingly marginalised as more and more people within the Free Church adopted the theology which Moody and Sankey had advocated and embraced a new social theology. The new social theology was influenced by the teachings of the Hebrew prophets and tended to stress the communal nature of life. This was in stark contrast to the kind of individualistic theology which had dominated the Presbyterian Churches in

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82 O. Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland*, pp.56-58. See also J. Springwall, B. Fraser and M. Hoare, *Sure and Steadfast: A History of the Boys' Brigade 1883-1983* (London,1883).

Scotland throughout the century. Professor George Adam Smith of the Glasgow Free Church College was one of the most influential academics in the development of a new theology. In his work Smith tried to show how the prophets had dealt with the kind of social problems which were still relevant to Scotland at the end of the nineteenth century.[83] Similarly, Alexander Bruce, the Professor of Apologetics and New Testament Exegesis at the Glasgow Free Church College concentrated on the "historical Jesus" and his teachings on the Kingdom of God. For Bruce, the emphasis Jesus had placed on the word Kingdom implied that Christianity should be concerned with regulating life on earth and with ensuring that workers were treated as human beings and were not simply tools of the economy.[84] The opinions of theologians like Smith and Bruce were first heard in the theological colleges, but before long their views were also being proclaimed from pulpits throughout the country.[85]

From the mid-1870s until 1881 the Free Church was preoccupied with the case of William Robertson Smith, the Professor of Hebrew at Aberdeen. In December 1875, Smith published an article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* which led to accusations of heresy from those who disliked his German theology and Biblical Criticism. After much discussion Smith was eventually removed from his post in May 1881. It has been argued that the Free Church had to set social issues to one side in the 1880s and 1890s because it became embroiled in theological controversies.[86] In fact, the two issues were closely inter-related. As long as individualistic Calvinism reigned supreme within the Free Church, the

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83 A.C. Cheyne, *The Transforming of the Kirk: Victorian Scotland's Religious Revolution* (Edinburgh,1983), p.136. See also C.G. Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (London,1987); D.J. Withrington, 'The Churches in Scotland, c.1870--c.1900: Towards a New Social Conscience?', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society,* xix (1955), pp.155-168; S.J. Brown, 'Reform, Reconstruction, Reaction: The Social Vision of Scottish Presbyterianism, c.1830--1930', *Scottish Journal of Theology,* xliv (December,1991), pp.489-517; W.H. Marwick, 'Social Heretics in the Scottish Churches', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society,* xi (1955), pp.227-239; D.C. Smith, *Passive Obedience and Prophetic Protest: Social Criticism in the Scottish Church 1830-1945* (New York,1982), pp.245-313.

84 A.C. Cheyne, *The Transforming of the Kirk: Victorian Scotland's Religious Revolution*, p.137.

85 Ibid., p.138.

86 Ibid., p.140.

Church's evangelistic programme would be more important than any call for social reform. For many Evangelicals, an individual's time on earth was fleeting when set against an eternity in heaven or hell. It was therefore crucial that the Church took God's message of salvation to the entire population. This is not to suggest that the Free Church considered social degradation to be unimportant. Nevertheless, Free Church ministers had generally doubted that any legislative programme of social reform could bring about the kind of egalitarian society which newly formed socialist groups were demanding. Rather, they held that a fair and just social structure would only be achieved in a country in which the majority of people were devoted Christians. Improved social conditions might make people more receptive to the word of God, but it was the word of God acting upon individual lives that would transform society. Nor, it must be stressed, had this view disappeared in the 1880s. Lewis Davidson, minister at the Mayfield Free church in Edinburgh, told the Assembly in 1886:

> We have to say to social reformers - "After you have done your best" - and I confess that I have little, if any, confidence in schemes of social reform that do not bear directly upon the perfection of the personal character rather than upon its surroundings, we would have to say to those men - "after the best has been done for men, what is it without the Gospel of Jesus Christ?"[87]

The emergence of a new theology challenged many of these long-standing beliefs. More and more ministers placed less emphasis on predestination and more stress on the importance of the individual decision for Christ. In one sense this should have strengthened the Free Church's home-mission programme. However, this was not the case. The new theology proved to be distinctly lethargic in its missionary outreach. In fact, advocates of the new theology held out little hope that religion alone would remove the inequalities from the country's social structure. Instead, like leaders of organised labour groups, ministers increasingly looked to State intervention as a means to this end. While more and more ministers were willing to acknowledge the inequalities within

87 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1886) p.73.

society, however, they rarely had a clear idea of what the Church's role would be in a society in which people would look towards the State to redress social injustices.

Despite its general conservatism in so many areas, the Free Church debated social matters with greater enthusiasm than the Church of Scotland though not with the same gusto as the United Presbyterians.[88] The Churches' greater willingness to discuss social matters in the 1880s was unquestionably encouraged by the realisation that Scottish socialism was inherently gradualist and ethical in contrast to the kind of revolutionary Marxism which was commonplace on the continent. This enabled the Churches to identify with working-class groups without fearing that they might contribute to an overturning of the social order. It was certainly important that Churches participated in debates concerning important social issues if government policy was not to be shaped without any religious contribution. After all, Britain was well on the road to a modern democracy. This meant that various interest groups, for whom religion might not have been a priority, were given a voice which they had never enjoyed before. The future of the Churches would depend on how they responded to the challenges placed before them by a fully industrialised economy served by a largely urban population and an increasingly democratic political system. In 1886, James Wells, the Home Mission Committee's joint convener, warned the Free Church that the success of its home-mission operations was as important as it had ever been.

> We have nothing to fear from a Christian democracy: other nations tell us what we may expect from an atheistic democracy. The only effective guarantees for the weal of our realm are found in the hearts of Christian men and women. Might we not easily do more to multiply these guarantees?[89]

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88 See D.C. Smith, *Passive Obedience and Prophetic Protest: Social Criticism in the Scottish Church 1830-1945.*

89 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record,* (April 1,1886) p.103.

Conclusion

The Free Church's preoccupation with the question of retaining its existing members in the early 1880s was an indication of how limited the long-term effects of Moody and Sankey's visit to Scotland had been. Initially, the Free Church's determination to tackle the problem of lapsing led to the adoption of the duplicate certificate scheme. Unfortunately for the Free Church, however, duplicate certificates proved only of limited value in helping to prevent people from lapsing. More than anything else, it was the indifference of ministers which was responsible for the lack of success which duplicate certificates had achieved. Given the environment in the early 1880s, it was hardly surprising that many ministers hoped that Moody and Sankey would rekindle interest in religion in the way they had during 1873-1874. Although a number of areas claimed that they had experienced a revival during the Americans' second visit to Scotland, it soon became apparent that they were not going to recapture anything like the enthusiasm generated during their first spell in the country. If a turbulent atmosphere was a good time in which to spread a revival then the 1880s seemed an ideal time for Moody and Sankey to return to Scotland. It is possible, however, that many people had become wary of revivals following events between 1859-1862 and 1873-1874. The revivals during those periods had generated an enormous level of expectation, leading many people to believe that the spiritual awakenings would strengthen interest in religion and transform the country's social problems. The revivals had temporarily achieved an increased interest in religion, but they had failed to regenerate society. It was perhaps not surprising, therefore, that few people were willing to have their hopes raised and dashed again in the early 1880s.

After the long-term failure of Moody and Sankey's first visit to Scotland in 1873, the celebration of the centenary of Thomas Chalmers' birth in 1880

provided an ideal opportunity for supporters of territorialism within the Free Church to reassert the aggressive, territorial ideal. Many ministers were convinced that a new church-extension campaign would be the perfect way to commemorate Chalmers, but it was clear that a number of presbyteries, including many of the largest, felt that the last thing the Free Church required was another church-extension campaign. Instead, many presbyteries argued that it was time the Free Church closed down churches in depopulated areas or in areas where they were not needed, so they could be moved to districts where there was a genuine demand for churches. The nature of population movement in the last quarter of the century meant that it had certainly become increasingly difficult to implement an effective territorial system. Nevertheless, the desire of those within the Free Church who wanted to close churches and move them to areas where there were Free Church adherents reflected the growing belief within the Church that it was a gathered Church of true believers rather than the true Church of Scotland.

In turn, the Free Church's increasing perception of itself as a Voluntary Church was one of the reasons why the Home Mission Committee spent so much money on congregational missions. When congregational missions were introduced in 1868 it was stipulated that they would not receive more than £500 of the Home Mission Committee's income each year. Over time, however, congregational missions claimed an increasing proportion of the Committee's expenditure. It was certainly difficult to justify the money congregational missions received if the Home Mission Committee's money was to be spent on genuinely home-mission activities. Congregational missions were intended, first and foremost, to provide for areas where the existing Free Church was crowded rather than to undertake aggressive, missionary work in areas of low church attendance. Given their initial remit, it was always unlikely that congregational missions would make any significant impact upon what appeared to be the

growing numbers of people outwith the Church.

Although it is important not to exaggerate the level of residential segregation between the classes in the nineteenth century, it did seem that the middle class, the labour aristocracy and those at the bottom of the social scale, were increasingly living in different areas with the result that they had limited contact with members of other social groups. Since Chalmers' time in Glasgow between 1815-1823, territorialism had been looked upon as a way to encourage cooperation and thereby sympathy between the classes. During a period of greater residential segregation like the 1880s, however, the territorial system seemed to hark back to a golden age which was no longer relevant to Scotland in the last quarter of the century when society seemed at every level to have become divided along class lines. These divisions were particularly evident in politics. With more and more members of the working class receiving the vote, it was perhaps only a matter of time before large sections of the working class decided that their social improvement depended upon class-based politics aimed at achieving collectivist legislation, rather than upon working with Conservative and Liberal parties or with Churches. It would be another generation before working-class political organisations made serious inroads at elections, but the fact that the 1880s saw a rapid increase in the number of such groups was a reflection on the turbulence of that period. The agenda set by these new, socialist organisations was given credence because of the economic environment in the 1880s. Britain's economic success had been based upon a philosophy of rugged individualism and *laissez-faire*. After the British economy entered a trade depression from the mid-1870s, it was not long before many of these views were challenged with an intensity which had never been seen before.

The emergence of a more humane, collective critique of society also had important implications for theology. Since Moody and Sankey first arrived in Scotland in 1873, there had been a growing movement away from Calvinism

towards an Arminian style of theology. Arminianism rejected predestination and stressed instead the importance of an individual's decision in whether or not to accept God's offer of grace. In theory at least, this should have led the Free Church to undertake large-scale evangelistic meetings aimed at producing mass conversions. As we shall see in the next chapter, although there was a degree of confidence in what large-scale meetings could achieve, such campaigns were rarely undertaken with any regularity. Traditional Calvinism could often appear to be heartless and unemotional. Nevertheless, it was supporters of old-style Presbyterianism who would remain at the forefront in encouraging the Free Church to undertake aggressive home-mission programmes.

The next chapter will also explore how the Free Church continued to be more concerned by how to retain its existing members rather than looking to restate its commitment to home-mission work. We will also see how the Free Church's preoccupation with theological controversies and the disestablishment campaign merely served to distract the Church from its commitment to territorialism: with the result that the Church isolated itself from large sections of the Scottish people. Further, while many within the Free Church were sceptical of what a territorial programme could achieve, the next chapter will show just how important the Church of Scotland's commitment to territorialism, under the guidance of Donald Macleod, had proved to be in the Established Church's successful attempt to reassert its own importance in the face of organisations which were campaigning for disestablishment. In the past, it had been the Free Church's success in the mission field which had encouraged the Church of Scotland to make a greater effort at evangelising the Scottish people. However, as we will see, it was the Church of Scotland's impressive work in the home-mission field which was one of the key factors in forcing the Free Church to realise that it could not afford to neglect the work of evangelising a Scottish public which it still claimed to represent.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CHURCH DISTRACTED, 1889-1894

Between 1843 and 1874 the Free Church had shown a remarkable loyalty to Chalmers' territorial plan as an instrument for evangelization. Moody and Sankey's visit to Scotland in 1873-1874, however, had shown the Scottish Churches that there was an alternative to territorialism: namely, a campaign which centred upon frequent mass meetings aimed at securing mass conversions. After 1874, there was a great deal of uncertainty within the Free Church over the best way to pursue a home-mission programme. Thomas Cochrane, minister at what began in the 1850s as the St. John's church territorial mission in the Pleasance in Edinburgh, endeavoured to reassert the territorial principle. In 1888, Cochrane published *Church Work: Hints to Young Ministers,* which was based upon his extensive pastoral experience.[1] Cochrane's book included a chapter on 'Mission Work in the Congregation' which provided an unwavering endorsement of the territorial plan.[2]

Cochrane was typical of those ministers who had grown weary with the style of evangelization which became so popular following Moody and Sankey's success in the early 1870s. Although Cochrane conceded that Moody and Sankey's method of operating had produced some impressive results, he remained sceptical about whether or not their method was any more successful than the territorial plan.[3] Moody and Sankey's method had revolved around large, frequent and often emotional meetings where people were aroused by the enthusiasm generated at a gathering. A disappointing aspect of Moody and Sankey's method, however, was the feeling of anticlimax after a meeting had ended or when the two evangelists had left an area. Further, Moody and

1 T. Cochrane, *Church Work: Hints to Young Ministers* (Edinburgh,1888).

2 Ibid., pp.17-23.

3 Ibid., p.20.

Sankey's assistants often found it difficult to bring those who had expressed interest at a meeting into regular church attendance.

It was perhaps not surprising that so many ministers felt that Moody and Sankey's revivalist approach was the best way to conduct a home-mission. Generally, the number of people reached by mass revival meetings was greater than a territorial operation could reach in an equivalent period of time. Looking at Moody and Sankey's contribution to Scotland in the long-term, however, Thomas Cochrane calculated that "Large gatherings and promiscuous gatherings, largely attended, are not necessarily, certainly not always, the most fruitful in results for good."[4] Cochrane also felt ministers at large revival meetings were often preaching to an audience predominantly comprised of existing churchgoers. In contrast, the territorial method for Cochrane had made a priority of reaching the people who were unlikely to be attracted to a large meeting. Cochrane therefore concluded that the "individualising" process of the territorial method was still the most effective way to operate if Churches hoped to make major inroads upon those outwith the Church in Scotland.[5]

Cochrane, it should be recalled, had enjoyed great success through territorialism at his congregation in the Pleasance since the 1850s. It was hardly surprising that he placed so much faith in the territorial method. Many of Cochrane's colleagues, however, had become convinced that the revivalist approach was the most fruitful way to operate. This line of thought was particularly evident among ministers in Glasgow. The Free Presbytery of Glasgow, for example, initiated a campaign at the start of 1888 which was directed at the combination of religious indifference and social misery in the east end of the city, a district of Glasgow which had been home to many of the city's Roman Catholic community since the 1840s. In addition to the poverty of the district, the thirteen Free Church ministers in the area were concerned that only 26,000 of the

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4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., p.21.

200,000 people who lived to the east of the High Street were members of the three largest Presbyterian denominations.[6] Furthermore, only about 8,000 people in the east end were members of the Free Church.[7] At the time, it was calculated that two-thirds of the city's inhabitants did not go to church.[8] The area's Free Church ministers brought the problems of the east end to the attention of the presbytery in 1888. Convinced of the severity of the situation, the presbytery approved a proposal for a concentrated evangelistic effort in the east end and appointed four evangelists to undertake the work.[9] During this campaign the four evangelists held a series of large Sunday afternoon meetings in fifteen churches over a forty-two week period. These meetings were publicised by the distribution of hand bills, indicating that Free Church ministers had learned from Moody and Sankey about the need to advertise their services.[10] The evangelists succeeded in attracting large audiences to their meetings. Having attracted people to their services, the evangelists sought to ensure that people did not drift away from the Church after a meeting had finished. Thus, 1,418 cards were used to collect the details of those who had stayed behind and expressed an interest in becoming Church members. The evangelists then ensured that each individual was visited in his or her home by a voluntary worker. One hundred people subsequently joined the Free Church as a result of these methods, and some people decided to join other denominations.[11] These results were hardly overwhelming given that the programme had been conducted over a forty-two week period. Nevertheless, the Presbytery of Glasgow was sufficiently impressed by the scheme that it sanctioned a similar programme in the southside of the city during the winter of 1888-1889.[12] It was surprising that the Presbytery of Glasgow

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6 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (December,1888) p.302.

7 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1889) p.122.

8 Ibid.

9 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (December,1888) p.302.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid., pp.302-303.

12 Ibid., p.302.

should be so impressed by the revivalist style campaign. After all, the Presbytery of Glasgow had also passed a resolution in March 1888 to encourage territorial work in the city.[13]

William Ross, the minister at the Cowcaddens church in central Glasgow, sought to combine both the revivalist and territorial methods within his district. The Cowcaddens church had started as a mission station in the 1860s when the Free Tron church decided to concentrate its mission work in the area.[14] The Reverend Gabriel Kerr, the missionary employed by the Tron congregation, gathered together a band of workers in order to evangelise the Cowcaddens district. The group included William Collins, a future Lord Provost of the city. The work made some initial progress, but a disagreement soon emerged between the Free Tron congregation and Kerr about how much should be spent on a church building for the Tron mission station. The Tron congregation felt that £4,000 would build a church which was quite sufficient for the congregation's needs; Kerr, however, had more ambitious plans for the district and was adamant that they should build a larger church. As a result of this dispute, the Free Tron congregation withdrew its oversight of the mission.[15] Those attending the mission, however, persuaded Kerr not to resign as their missionary and the station's affairs were placed in the hands of a Committee of the Presbytery of Glasgow. In March 1865, Kerr was established as the station's permanent missionary and it became known as the Cowcaddens Free church mission station.[16] The congregation grew steadily and the General Assembly agreed to sanction the mission in 1867. Anxious to build a church for the fledgling congregation, Kerr purchased a site on the corner of Maitland Street and Garscube Road. When finally completed the new church had

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13 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1888) Appendix xx p.60.

14 *In Memory of the Reverend William Ross, Cowcaddens*, p.11.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., p.12.

accommodation for 1,150 people.[17] The £10,000 it had cost to purchase the site and build the church, however, also meant a heavy burden of debt for the congregation.

Kerr died on 29 January 1883, and on 20 August 1883, the congregation's two hundred members called William Ross of Rothesay. He was inducted as their new minister on the 18 October.[18] Ross was born in 1836 in Lybster in Caithness. From Caithness, he entered Moray House Teacher Training College in Edinburgh and later went on to study at the University of Edinburgh and then at New College. After he was licensed, Ross served as minister of the Chapelhill Free church in Rothesay between 1867-1883.[19] Having arrived in Glasgow from the relative stability of Rothesay, Ross was appalled but challenged by the variety of problems which confronted him in Cowcaddens. Like many areas in central Glasgow, Cowcaddens had been adversely affected by the work of the Glasgow City Improvement Trust from 1866. Many of those who had been made homeless by the slum clearance work of the Trust, particularly those from the Saltmarket, had relocated in Cowcaddens.[20] Consequently, Cowcaddens had become overcrowded. Cowcaddens was also home to some of the city's largest theatres which, for Ross, added to the sense of moral degradation in the district.[21] The fact that Cowcaddens was one of the districts upon which Moody and Sankey had chosen to concentrate during their work in Glasgow in 1882 further indicated the district's negative reputation. After Moody and Sankey had left Glasgow, the United Evangelistic Association had continued to perform mission work in the area, ensuring that a number of people were waiting to be enrolled as members of the Cowcaddens church when Ross was finally settled to the charge.[22]

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17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., p.14.

19 Ibid., pp.55-56.

20 J.M.E. Ross, *William Ross of Cowcaddens--A Memoir by his son* (London,1905), p.88.

21 Ibid., p.90.

22 Ibid., pp.100-102.

Shortly after Ross had settled in Cowcaddens, it became apparent that he had a voracious appetite for mission work. During his time in Glasgow, the congregation conducted two missions throughout the months of January and July.[23] The success of these missions convinced Ross that each congregation in the Free Church should hold at least two weeks of mission work each year. At the same time, Ross also remained committed to the territorial principle.[24] In an effort to prevent unnecessary overlapping among mission groups, the Glasgow Home Mission Union had mapped out and apportioned much of the city to congregations of different denominations. The area given to Cowcaddens formed a rough triangle around the church, and it was to this district that Ross directed his mission work.[25]

Although his sympathies lay with the Church's conservative wing, Ross did not play an active role in the theological controversies which plagued the Free Church in the 1880s and 1890s. Unlike many of his conservative colleagues, Ross embraced the use of hymns and choirs and was also a keen supporter of disestablishment. In common with many Evangelicals, however, Ross's preaching style had the kind of "Celtic fire" which had held a magnetic appeal to the Scottish people for some time.[26] In fact, it was not long before Ross's impact upon the area began to manifest itself in major increases in attendance at the church. After only four years in Cowcaddens, Ross had seen his congregation grow from 326 members to 1,001.[27]

Ross followed the usual pattern for working-class churches in Glasgow by holding forenoon and afternoon Sunday services, although it was the later meetings which generally attracted larger audiences.[28] Further, an open-air meeting was regularly conducted at the New City Showground while the

23 Ibid., p.119.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid., p.129.
26 Ibid., p.140.
27 *In Memory of the Reverend William Ross, Cowcaddens*, p.77.
28 J.M.E. Ross, *William Ross of Cowcaddens--A Memoir by his son*, p.152.

congregation gathered in the church for the forenoon service.[29] Finally, the church was open each Sunday for an evening service. Having already delivered two sermons earlier in the day, Ross generally invited another minister to conduct the evening service. This evening service was open to everyone in the city - an invitation which Ross publicised by posting bills throughout Glasgow - despite reservations from his office-bearers about the cost.[30] As befitted a former secretary of the Free Church's Total Abstinence Society and convener of the Free Church's Committee on Temperance, Ross was keen to encourage temperate habits among the area's inhabitants and he established a Band of Hope in his congregation.[31] In addition, Ross held a gospel temperance service at the church each Monday evening - in the conviction that a number of people would be prepared to take the pledge following their drunken excesses at the weekend. Those attending these meetings could expect to hear a lecture by a spokesman from a temperance organisation such as the Scottish Temperance League or the Permissive Bill Association.[32] Ross's effort on behalf of temperance received further encouragement in 1890 when Parliament passed a Police Act which gave electoral wards in the city the opportunity to vote themselves dry, a measure which did not become national until 1913.

Like other prominent territorialists such as Chalmers, MacColl, Buchanan and Wilson, Ross appreciated that a territorial congregation could only become a focal point for the local community if it offered a vibrant and attractive range of agencies. Within a short space of time Ross's church offered a wide array of organisations: Choir, Childrens Class, Boys and Girls Industrial Societies, Boys' Brigade. Mothers' Meetings, sabbath schools, Bible Classes, Christian Endeavour Societies, Literary Societies, prayer meetings, Medical Mission, communicants

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29 Ibid., p.160.
30 Ibid., p.152.
31 Ibid., p.168.
32 Ibid.

meetings and office-bearers and workers meetings.[33] Unable to oversee so many activities on his own, Ross relied heavily upon Peter Mcbryde Stewart, the congregation's domestic missionary, who assisted at all the evangelical meetings in addition to supervising the nightly meetings and visitations.[34]

The £4,300 debt for the church building was a difficult legacy for Ross to inherit. It was to his credit, however, that he did not allow the debt to paralyse the congregation's home-mission work. He received £2,200 in donations towards payment of the debt in 1887 and the remaining debt was cleared in 1889 after further help from the Jubilee Debt Extinction Scheme.[35] With the debt cleared Ross was able to turn his attention to another aspect of the congregation's finances. After the Disruption, many Free Church ministers had hoped that seat rents could be eliminated, as a means of attracting the poorest sections of the community to regular church attendance. By the 1880s, following continual difficulties with the Sustentation Fund, it seemed that there was no alternative to seat rents if a church was to be self supporting and the minister provided with an adequate stipend. William Ross remained a consistent opponent of seat rents however, and was convinced that seat rents prevented the poor from attending church. Further, Ross felt that a church could only claim to be truly aggressive in its mission if it removed the barriers which prevented strangers from attending. Instead of having fixed seat rents at the Cowcaddens church, Ross persuaded his office-bearers to introduce a seat offering four times a year at which people could give as much as they could afford. As Ross predicted, this policy proved remarkably successful in attracting people to the church.[36]

Still not satisfied with what he had achieved in Cowcaddens, Ross began what became known as a Pioneers Mission in an effort to attract those at the

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33 Ibid., p.169.
34 Ibid., p.165.
35 Ibid., pp.176-177.
36 Ibid., pp.180-181.

bottom of the social scale to the church.[37] This new agency reflected the increasing influence of new, non-denominational organisations in the mission field like the Salvation Army and the Gospel Temperance Army. Many of these organisations were at odds with the Churches and Ross himself felt "that undenominational work is the most denominational and sectarian of any."[38] It was John Galloway of Ardrossan and not Ross who originally suggested the idea for a Pioneers Mission. During a meeting with Ross, Galloway told him how impressed he was with what the Salvation Army had achieved in the city's most destitute quarters and asked Ross whether he thought such work could be undertaken in Cowcaddens by women who lived among the poor.[39] Ross was impressed by Galloway's suggestion and received permission from the Free Church's Home Mission Committee to begin a Pioneers Mission under the supervision of the Cowcaddens kirk-session. In turn, the kirk-session selected and trained two Christian women to undertake the work. After their training, the two women were settled in a cottage at Baynes Court to the north-west of the church.[40]

In order to ensure that the two women had a manageable territory to oversee they were assigned a district with approximately 170 families, generally from the very poorest inhabitants of the area. The majority of the families were Roman Catholics and of the remaining families few had any church connection.[41] The women encountered harrowing scenes, including drunkenness, deserted wives and illegitimate children. Despite these problems, the Baynes Court Mission proved such a resounding success that the Cowcaddens church soon decided to establish a similar Pioneers Mission at a first floor flat in nearby Milton Lane. A third mission was later established at Church

37 Ibid., p.217.
38 Ibid., p.114.
39 Ibid., p.217.
40 Ibid., p.218.
41 Ibid.

Place.[42] Like the Cowcaddens church itself, the organisers hoped that the Pioneers Missions would maintain a state of perpetual revival and for this purpose they held two or three nights of evangelistic work each week.[43] Each year, on 'Founders day', members of the three Pioneers Missions came together for a joint service, generally held in the church hall. Before long the church itself had to be used to accommodate all those attracted to the church as a result of the Pioneers Missions.[44] Although the Pioneers Missions exceeded Ross's "most sanguine expectations" they were never intended to develop into independent congregations or charges.[45] Rather, they were to provide a route by which those who had no church connection would become members of the Cowcaddens church.[46] Whereas congregational missions merely separated the poorest from the respectable elements of an existing congregation, the Pioneers Missions provided the Cowcaddens church with a perpetual flow of new members. It soon transpired that it was not only the Cowcaddens church which had benefited from the success of the Pioneers Missions. The local police claimed that the Pioneers Missions had helped to improve the overall tone of the area: no mean achievement in an area like Cowcaddens.[47]

It was not uncommon for an energetic minister to enjoy success when he first arrived in an area. What made Ross exceptional was his ability to maintain success after people had grown accustomed to his presence in the area. In 1893-1894 Ross managed to attract 222 people to the church. Another 174 people were enrolled as church members in 1894-1895. The Cowcaddens church could boast a total of 1,267 members by 1895.[48] In 1896, the Free Church's statistics on membership began to differentiate those who had joined a church from another

42 Ibid., pp.220-221.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid., p.226.
45 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1893) Appendix iii p.3.
46 J.M.E. Ross, *William Ross of Cowcaddens--A Memoir by his son*, p.227.
47 Ibid., p.229.
48 Ibid.

congregation and those who were genuinely new recruits. This gave more precise figures on those congregations which were growing because of their success in the mission field. Thus, of the 184 people added to the Cowcaddens church membership in 1897, only forty came with certificates from other congregations.[49] Ross soon developed a national reputation throughout Britain for his home-mission work. In 1891, he was invited to become the manager of a headquarters for mission work and training school for mission workers in the east end of London.[50] However, Ross decided to stay in Glasgow, partly because he feared that his successor would make the church less rather than more aggressive.[51]

In 1895, Ross asked the congregation to appoint a colleague who would perform everyday pastoral duties while he continued to take responsibility for the congregation's mission work.[52] Many of Ross's ministerial colleagues would have been content to let a younger assistant perform the exacting mission work while they eased into retirement by delivering well-worn sermons. Ross, however, never forgot that a minister's foremost responsibility lay in protecting the spiritual and physical welfare of those who lived within his allotted territory, regardless of whether or not they were church members. For many years, Ross had delivered Gaelic services at the Cowcaddens church for those who had moved to the area from the Highlands and had taught the Gaelic class at the Glasgow Free Church College. Consequently, the United Free Church, formed in 1900 at the union of the Free Church and United Presbyterian Church, decided to utilise his knowledge of Gaelic and experience of the Highlands and the Cowcaddens congregation gave Ross its permission to work for the Assembly's Highland Committee in 1901. Ross, however, retained his senior position at

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49 *In Memory of the Reverend William Ross, Cowcaddens*, pp.77-79.

50 J.M.E. Ross, *William Ross of Cowcaddens--A Memoir by his son*, p.233.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid., p.241.

Cowcaddens and divided his time between Glasgow and the Highlands.[53] It would appear that even the possibility of full-time work in the relative tranquillity of his native Highlands could not persuade Ross to leave his beloved Cowcaddens.

Ross had shown that the territorial system could still be applied even in the most arduous circumstances and that it could be effectively combined with revivalist techniques. By combining the best of the old and new methods of operating a home-mission programme, Ross had transformed the fortunes of the Cowcaddens church. Moreover, his success was achieved by concentrating on those within his surrounding territory and not by attracting people who liked his style of preaching from elsewhere in the city. If the aggressive method could prove successful in an area like Cowcaddens, there was no reason it could not work in other and less trying districts. All it required was ministers with the same appetite for mission work as Ross had.

As the passions which had been aroused by the Ten Years' Conflict and the bitter disestablishment campaign gave way to a less volatile religious environment in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, there was a real possibility of greater cooperation between Churches in the home-mission field. Since the Free Church had negotiated an informal alliance with the United Presbyterian Church over disestablishment in 1874, a desire for cooperation became an increasingly prominent feature of relations between the two denominations. While the small group of ministers in the Free Church who clung to a belief in the Church-State connection could not be overlooked, it was increasingly apparent that the two denominations had a great deal in common such as their theological beliefs, church practices and Voluntary positions. With union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches the seemingly inevitable conclusion to the close relationship which had materialised between the two denominations, it made sense to prepare for this union by cooperating at

53 Ibid., p. 286.

the grass-roots level. In the 1850s and 1860s denominational rivalry had been an integral aspect of home-mission operations in Scotland. Although cooperation was arguably beneficial, particularly when there was no shortage of enthusiastic mission agencies, the 1880s led to a realisation that "there must surely be a more ideal way of winning the world to Christ than that of competing mission-halls and clothing societies."[54] By pooling their resources the Churches would be able to make a greater impact within the home-mission field. This was commendable, but it was unfortunate that it took until the 1880s before the Churches realised that overlapping was often a waste of precious resources.

No city had proved more problematic to the Churches than Glasgow and so it was appropriate that the city became the scene of one of the earliest attempts at cooperation. At the start of 1883 a Home Mission Union was formed in Glasgow in order to combine and coordinate the home-mission work of several Presbyterian denominations.[55] While the Free and United Presbyterian Churches were able to give their support to the Home Mission Union without much dispute, a controversy arose in the Church of Scotland. When Dr. Marshall Lang asked the Church of Scotland's Presbytery of Glasgow to give their support to the Home Mission Union, he was opposed by Donald Macleod who insisted that the territorial system remained the most effective way to conduct a home-mission programme.[56] Lang's motion was eventually passed by a small majority, but this dispute had shown the Free Church that it would not be easy to gain the Church of Scotland's cooperation in the home-mission field. While the Free Church was left to bemoan "the shortsightedness of Dr M'leod" it was perhaps not surprising that many Church of Scotland ministers were reluctant to have a closer relationship with either the Free or United Presbyterian

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54 *The British Weekly*, (September 30,1887) p.343.

55 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (April 1,1887) p.98. There had been an inter-denominational mission group in Glasgow in the 1820s. The Glasgow City Mission was formed in 1826 and encouraged the formation of similar groups in other cities.

56 Ibid.

Churches.[57] Both denominations had recently taken the lead in a bitter campaign for disestablishment in Scotland and so it was quite possible that many ministers in the Established Church, like Donald Macleod, may have refused to overlook the behaviour of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches over the previous twenty-five years.

The desire for cooperation with other denominations gathered pace within the Free Church. At the Free Church General Assembly in 1887 an overture was submitted which asked the Home Mission and Foreign Mission Committees to look at the possibility of cooperating with other denominations in both the home-mission and foreign-mission fields. In response, the Foreign Mission Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to meet with equivalent Committees of other Churches.[58] The Free Church's Home Mission Committee, however, wanted further time to consider the matter.[59] After giving the subject greater consideration, the Home Mission Committee informed the General Assembly in 1889 that it could not recommend cooperation because of the volatile state of relations between the Churches in Scotland.[60] The Committee stressed that it valued cooperation, but felt that it could only be achieved with like-minded denominations and in favourable conditions. It therefore did no more than encourage individual ministers and Church members to work and consult with other denominations.[61]

While the Home Mission Committee was unwilling to commit itself to any wide ranging scheme of cooperation, individual ministers did look to cooperate with their counterparts from other denominations at a local level. In 1890, every Free and United Presbyterian minister in the southside of Glasgow joined in a local mission programme. On one Sunday, twenty-seven Free

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57 Ibid.

58 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1888) Appendix iii p.23.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid., (1889) Appendix iii p.9.

61 Ibid.

Church ministers occupied the pulpits of their United Presbyterian colleagues while twenty-two United Presbyterian ministers helped "to conduct evangelistic services" in Free churches.[62] The success of these meetings led to the formation of a Cooperative Union between the two Churches which was intended to encourage pulpit exchanges as well as joint evangelistic services and conferences.[63] Likewise, in September 1890, a complete scheme of pulpit exchange took place on one Sunday and joint meetings were held in the evening. United Presbyterian and Free Church ministers also held a conference on 'Aggressive Work' at the end of 1890 and joint prayer meetings were held in the first week of 1891.[64]

Despite its general reticence on such matters, the Free Church General Assembly did give the Home Mission Committee permission in 1890 to consult with the 'Home Board' of the United Presbyterian Church in an effort to prevent overlapping in the mission field. In turn, the Home Mission Committee held a conference with the United Presbyterians and both denominations agreed to appoint Sub-Committees in order to see what could be done to encourage greater cooperation in the home-mission field.[65] The Free Church Sub-Committee also sent a circular to the presbytery clerk in each church to find out what cooperation existed within their territory. This investigation revealed the popularity of pulpit exchanges, united evangelistic work, joint missionary meetings and cooperation on a number of temperance issues between Churches of both denominations.[66] Before long, the United Presbyterian and Free Church Joint Committee on Cooperation recommended that the Home Mission Committee and the presbyteries should encourage congregational union where practicable.[67]

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62 Ibid., (1890) Appendix xx p.10.

63 Ibid.

64 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (October,1890) p.305.

65 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1891) Appendix iii a p.1.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid., p.4.

It was perhaps ironic that the level of cooperation was so extensive between congregations of different denominations when the Churches' supreme courts had proved so reluctant to commit themselves to any large-scale cooperation. The Free Church's own Sub-Committee on Cooperation felt the situation could be improved if the General Assembly would follow the example set by the inferior Church courts in encouraging cooperation.[68] The Free Church General Assembly's reluctance to encourage cooperation with other Scottish Presbyterian Churches contrasted with their position regarding the Presbyterian Church in England. In 1888, the General Assembly passed a resolution which enabled Free Church ministers and English Presbyterian ministers to sit at each other's supreme courts. It was another four years before the Free Church General Assembly adopted a similar plan whereby up to six Free and United Presbyterian ministers could attend each other's supreme courts without voting rights.[69]

With their enhanced cooperation the Free and United Presbyterian Churches revived their campaign for disestablishment. The two Churches were convinced that the notion of an Established Church was an anachronism in the pluralistic Scottish society of the later nineteenth century. The Church of Scotland, however, was determined to resist. Over time, the Established Church's tactics of Church defence proved remarkably successful, both in defeating the disestablishment campaign and in reinvigorating interest in home-mission work. The Church defence campaign also strengthened the Church of Scotland's commitment to promote the welfare of the entire Scottish population. Keith Phin, the convener of the Established Church's Home Mission Committee, felt that the Church of Scotland had "a hold of the Scottish people which specially fits her to promote their social, moral, and religious welfare."[70] At the same time, the Church of Scotland did not indulge in a high level of social criticism. Of course, the Church of Scotland's future as an Established Church was closely

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid., (1892) Appendix iii p.20.

70 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland*, (1886) p.202.

tied to the existing political order and so it had to be careful not to be seen as unnecessarily criticising the status quo. Further, while the Free Church's home-mission programme was seemingly at a crossroads, the Established Church had the kind of confidence in territorialism which was reminiscent of the Free Church during the 1850s and 1860s. The Free Church might have been entitled to look upon the Church of Scotland's commitment to territorialism with some dismay, but the Church of Scotland was determined to show that a parochial system could only be implemented successfully by an Established Church. Moreover, as the Free Church ceased claiming to be the true, national Church of Scotland, the Established Church was able to resurrect Thomas Chalmers' damning indictment of Dissenting Churches. Shortly after the Disruption Chalmers had refuted any suggestion that the Free Church was a Voluntary organisation. The Free Church could hardly deny in the 1880s, however, that it had occupied precisely the position which its most famous founding father had been so hostile towards. Chalmers had been quick to dismiss the growth of Dissenting Churches before the Disruption:

> It has but effected a transference, not a creation of worshippers. This last is the proper office of a territorial Establishment; and, if not furnished with the means for such a service in a sufficiency both of ministers and churches, then let the feeble supplements of sectarian chapels be multiplied as they may - they are but the signals of a great scarcity instead of the symptoms of abundance, and we shall behold the profligacy and irreligion of our land to be multiplied along with them.[71]

Although the Established Church's future still hung in the balance in the early 1880s, it had nevertheless been able to counter the aggressive offensive by supporters of disestablishment. The Established Church's programme of Church defence had also succeeded in generating support from all sections of the community, something which cannot be overlooked when trying to explain the dwindling enthusiasm for disestablishment. The Church of Scotland's

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[71] *The Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Missionary Record*, (December 1,1879) p.531.

commitment to aggressive territorialism was furthered when Thomas Nicol, one of the Established Church's most enthusiastic territorialists, was appointed editor of *The Church of Scotland's Home and Foreign Missionary Record* in January 1886.[72]

While Nicol used the Church of Scotland's official organ to publicise the benefits of territorialism, Donald Macleod, the minister at the Park church, Glasgow, emerged as the Established Church's most committed advocate of the territorial system. As well as trying to show that the territorial programme could still be implemented at the parish level, Macleod published a series of articles in an effort to stimulate greater interest in territorialism. Macleod provided an article on Thomas Chalmers for the *Scottish Divines* series in 1883 which revealed how impressed he was with Chalmers' territorial legacy.[73] This revealed how a minister in the Established Church in the 1880s could discuss Chalmers' contribution to Scotland's religious and social environment without feeling the need to dwell on events which culminated in the Disruption. Like Chalmers, Macleod was convinced that Voluntary churches were based on a system of attraction whereas endowed, Established churches were better organised for an aggressive ministry.[74] This may have been how an endowed, territorial Establishment was supposed to work in theory, but Macleod recognised that the Church of Scotland had failed to implement the territorial ideal on the scale which Chalmers would have liked:

> We have the utmost faith in Chalmers' conceptions for the religious polity of our great towns as well as in our country parishes, but we have yet to wait for a fair and complete trial of the Establishment theory amidst the complex conditions of modern society.[75]

Similarly, Macleod wrote an article on 'The Parochial System' for a book

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72 Ibid., (March 1,1884) p.59.

73 D. Macleod, 'Thomas Chalmers', in Scottish *Divines 1505-1872*, St Giles Lectures, 3rd Series, (Edinburgh,1883), p.293.

74 Ibid., pp.294-295.

75 Ibid., p.303.

on *The Church and the People* in 1886.[76] In this essay he claimed that the endowed, territorial method was still the most effective way to implement a home-mission programme.[77] At a time when organisations like the Glasgow Home Mission Union were emulating the kind of meetings used by Moody and Sankey, it was important that Macleod reminded people of what a well organised territorial system could achieve. Like previous champions of endowments such as Chalmers and Robertson, Macleod was convinced that an endowment guaranteed the independence of each minister to speak freely without fear of offending those who paid his wages.[78] It required an Act of Parliament to separate a church and minister from a parish and so Macleod felt that the parish system provided an element of security to the poorest sections of the community that religious ordinances would be available within their area even if it was no longer financially viable.[79] This was in contrast to the thirty-seven Voluntary churches in Glasgow which Macleod claimed had withdrawn from the area they had been situated in during the previous forty years because their district had fallen upon hard times to such an extent that the church had ceased to be self-supporting.[80] As far as Macleod was concerned, this was concrete proof that Voluntary churches had a tendency to become dependent upon the middle classes. Macleod also recognised, however, that the Established Church's *quoad sacra* congregations - in which seat rents were commonplace - could easily alienate the poorest sections of the community.[81] Towards the end of the century it was clear that large sections of the working class could still not afford to pay seat rents. Similarly, Macleod claimed that ministers at *quoad sacra* churches were reluctant to invite the poor to the local church because they had to

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76 D. Macleod, 'The Parochial System', in *The Church and the People, St Giles Lectures, 6th Series* (Edinburgh,1886).

77 Ibid., p.112.

78 Ibid., p.137.

79 Ibid., p.139.

80 Ibid., p.140.

81 Ibid., pp.145-146.

make sure that the church was occupied by people who could guarantee their salaries.[82] If ministers were deliberately isolating a large section of the community, there was no way they could be described as aggressive, which, after all, was a prerequisite for a successful territorial congregation. This was also particularly alarming given that *quoad sacra* churches formed the majority of the Established Church's church provision in Glasgow in 1888.[83]

It was ironic that *quoad sacra* churches had developed such a middle-class bias by the 1880s.[84] After all, *quoad sacra* churches had been intended in the 1830s to provide for those, generally in the poorest areas, where the parish system had broken down under the pressure of rapid population growth. Moreover, *quoad sacra* churches had been looked upon in the 1830s as a short-term solution to the breakdown in the parish system and were never intended to dominate the Established Church's church provision in the way they did in Glasgow during the 1880s. There was nothing to prevent a minister at a *quoad sacra* church from undertaking an aggressive territorial programme within his district, but it was still far removed from what people looked upon as the ideal parish system. For his part, Macleod later proposed a system of free churches in order to replace the unhealthy dominance of *quoad sacra* congregations.[85] According to this plan, each minister would receive a grant in order to compensate them for any loss they might experience after abandoning seat rents. Macleod felt this would safeguard each minister's salary and also enable him to undertake house-to-house visitation in an effort to attract the poorest members of society to the local parish church.[86]

In addition to his commitment to the territorial ministry, Donald Macleod took a keen interest in social issues. At the Church of Scotland General Assembly

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83 Ibid.

83 D. Macleod, *Non-Churchgoing and the Housing of the Poor* (Edinburgh,1888), p.14.

84 For an understanding of social mobility in relation to churchgoing see C.G. Brown, 'Did Urbanisation Secularise Britain', *Urban History Yearbook* (1988), pp.1-14.

85 D. Macleod, *Non-Churchgoing and the Housing of the Poor*, p.16.

86 Ibid.

in 1888, Macleod spoke in support of an overture from the Presbytery of Glasgow on Non-Churchgoing and the Housing of the Poor. He drew the Assembly's attention to what he regarded as the correlation between the 120,000 people in Glasgow who did not go to church and the 126,000 people in the city who lived in houses of only one room.[87] While some ministers blamed Glasgow's dreadful housing conditions on excessive drinking among the working classes, Macleod maintained that drunkenness was often a consequence of people living in unsatisfactory accommodation.[88] He also stressed that the Church should work to alleviate suffering on earth in addition to "the saving of a man's soul when he dies."[89] Although he did not feel it was the Church's responsibility to build housing, Macleod did argue that the Churches educate public opinion to be favourable to a State-supported house-building programme.[90] Significantly, the overture concerning Non-Churchgoing and the Housing of the Poor also recommended a more efficient, aggressive, territorial system.[91] It was apparent that the Church of Scotland felt that a programme of social improvement would only succeed if it was accompanied by a wide-ranging campaign of evangelization.

The Church of Scotland demonstrated such commitment to territorialism at a time when the Free Church appeared to have lost faith in the capabilities of a territorial programme. Through a renewed commitment to territorialism, the Church of Scotland had made itself relevant to the lives of ordinary people in a way which it had not been for some time. An example of this was the Glasgow Presbytery's work for subsidised housing. In contrast, the Free and United Presbyterian Churches had actually distanced themselves from the Scottish public by withdrawing from many of their home-mission operations. While the

87 Ibid., pp.8-10. In 1888-1889, J.B. Russell, Glasgow's Medical Officer of Health, published reports on housing and sanitation in the city.

88 Ibid., p.11.

89 Ibid., p.13.

90 Ibid.

91 Ibid., p.14.

rise of a new, less individualistic theology had legitimised social criticism within the Free Church it had also turned the denomination away from the home-mission field. Similarly, in its attempt to adapt to the challenge of higher criticism, the Free Church merely aggravated the existing divisions between the conservative and liberal wings of the Church. When the Free Church General Assembly passed a Declaratory Act in 1892, which watered down the denomination's commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, it led to the first split in the Free Church when a small conservative group in the Highlands left to form the Free Presbyterian Church. This small schism was merely a foretaste of what was to come, but it would be wrong to suggest that it was only Free Church ministers and members in the Highlands who had reservations about the direction in which the Free Church was heading. James Wells, the former convener of the Home Mission Committee and minister at the Glasgow Pollockshields (West) church, expressed his concern about the way that the rise of higher and social criticism had been achieved at the expense of the Free Church's evangelistic programme.[92] If social criticism was given precedence over home-mission matters then the Church was clearly in danger of claiming to speak for a working-class section in society which it had distanced itself from. Thomas Binnie, a Free Church elder in Glasgow, felt that the popularity of social theology had encouraged

> A new gospel of "What Christ would do if He came to Edinburgh, or Glasgow, or Chicago," was being preached, and they were called upon to let the old teaching, with which they were familiar, give place to the new. But they would like to ask those modern apostles - What did Christ preach? What did He teach? Was there no poverty in Jerusalem in His day? Were there no ill-paid workmen, no ill-housed families, no ragged children, no selfish oppressors of the poor? Was He unacquainted with the misery which abounded then, as now, or was He indifferent to it? Nay, verily, His heart was more abundantly filled with sympathy than the heart of our noblest philanthropist, yet they did not find that He advocated any of the plans so confidently recommended now, even in the modified form which would have made them suitable to His day. He knew, what many did not seem to

92 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1892) p.70.

know now-a-days, that the only effectual cure for all their social ills was the grace of God working in the hearts of all alike.[93]

Binnie and Wells were typical of those who were worried that the Free Church would end up out of its depth if it became preoccupied with 'secular' issues of which it had little specialised knowledge. It was an important part of the Church's role to look at social problems and criticise the responsible authorities. It was simply unfortunate that social criticism coincided with a reduced commitment by the Free Church to its home-mission programme. By reducing much of its home-mission work, the Free Church was in danger of appearing to be nothing more than a religious pressure group. In contrast, James Begg's Committee on the State of Working Class Housing between 1858-1867 had been one of the most effective examples of social criticism. Through persistent campaigning and stinging criticism, Begg succeeded in drawing public attention to what had long been the most serious but neglected social problem in Scotland. As we have seen, Begg perhaps mistakenly felt that the problem could be solved by working-class building societies, but his work was instrumental in helping to place the subject of housing firmly in the public domain. When local authorities finally accepted responsibility for building working-class housing in the last quarter of the century, it was Begg, more than any other Scottish minister, who had helped to create the kind of environment which made such a policy possible. Perhaps more significantly, Begg's desire to draw attention to the state of working-class housing in Scotland was not achieved at the expense of the Free Church's home-mission programme. Those in the Free Church who felt that social reform would only be achieved by government intervention did not necessarily make happy bed-fellows with Begg on a whole range of issues. None the less, they could have done worse than follow his example of how to campaign against a specific social problem. After all, the 1880s and 1890s had seen a large increase in the number of genuinely working-class groups which were

93 Ibid., (1894) pp.66-67.

campaigning for social justice. The formation of the Scottish Labour Party, the Social Democratic Federation, the Independent Labour Party and the Scottish Trade Union Congress were an indication of how labouring people had finally realised that social justice would only be achieved if they organised themselves politically instead of waiting for the existing political parties to pass social legislation. These organisations also promised working people that their social improvement depended upon collectivist action and not the kind of individualistic conversion which was at the root of the Church's missionary programme.[94]

It would be an exaggeration to claim that the working class had entirely abandoned the Church, but few ministers would have denied in the last quarter of the century that working-class people were adopting an increasingly flexible attitude towards church attendance. Throughout the century Presbyterian Churches had generally offered two and in many cases three Sunday services. At no stage were there any reliable statistics available to tell how many people attended more than one service, but it was generally accepted that most people attended church more than once on a Sunday. However, when the Free Church's Committee on the State of Religion and Morals investigated non-churchgoing in 1888, it discovered that people were increasingly only attending church once each Sunday.[95] This trend was particularly evident in urban areas, and most Free Church congregations in the Presbytery of Aberdeen had moved their afternoon service to the evening in an effort to prevent the problem. Sadly for the Free Church, however, this had done nothing to arrest the slide towards half-day hearing (attending church only once on Sundays).[96] The Committee's deputies discovered a similarly depressing situation when they visited Edinburgh.[97]

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94 C.G. Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (London,1987), p.187.

95 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1888) Appendix xx.

96 Ibid., p.48.

97 Ibid., (1889) Appendix xx p.36.

After investigating the problem of non-churchgoing, the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals identified five key factors. First, the self-indulgence of the wealthy. Secondly, the popularity of sports and amusements among the young. Thirdly, intemperance. Fourthly, the divisions among the Churches in Scotland. Fifthly, the influence of the secular press.[98] In an effort to find out precisely why people had adopted a more flexible attitude towards church attendance, the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals held a series of conferences during 1895-1896 which gave ministers the opportunity to discuss social matters as diverse as the 'The Moral Condition and Religious Life of the Agricultural Community', 'The Effects of Theatre-going on the Highest Welfare of the Young' and 'The Influence of Physical Recreation on Spiritual Life'.[99] The fact that the Committee submitted details only of the last mentioned conference in its report to the Free Church General Assembly in 1896 was an indication of the popularity of sport in the last quarter of the century.[100]

As we have seen, Scotland experienced a leisure boom from the early 1870s. This boom provided working-class people with an unprecedented number of recreational outlets in which to spend the time when they were not working. Despite the wide range of available leisure activities, the Sub-Committee directed most of its investigation to football. Organised football was a recent phenomenon in Scotland, but ministers had quickly identified football as the recreational pursuit most likely to encourage non-churchgoing. Indeed, a previous investigation in Glasgow had discovered "an excessive addiction to football" among young men.[101] Although the Sub-Committee could see nothing wrong with "youthly vigour" it was concerned about the way that football seemed to go beyond being merely a hobby.[102] While organised football may

98 Ibid., (1896) p.93.
99 Ibid., Appendix xix p.1.
100 Ibid.
101 Ibid., (1891) Appendix xx p.48.
102 Ibid., (1896) Appendix xix p.16.

have encouraged temperance and fitness among participants, the Committee found that swearing, drinking and gambling were all commonplace among supporters.[103]

Ministers clearly found it difficult to comprehend how football had a hold over the public which had once been the exclusive privilege of religious organisations. Football would never have appeared to be such a threat to the Church's authority if its hold over the public had only lasted ninety minutes each Saturday. Instead, football provided working men with an endless opportunity to discuss their teams' fortunes whether in the home, pub or workplace. For three hundred years, Scottish Presbyterianism had doubted the value of anything which seemed to divert an individual's attention from spiritual matters. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that the Committee felt that "A pastime, however innocent in itself, ceases to be a pastime when it is allowed to extrude the more serious interests of life, to interfere with ordinary duty, and to incapacitate for religious worship."[104]

When the sport made the successful transition from amateurism to professionalism between 1880-1900, Scots proved such talented footballers that they were highly sought after by clubs in the professionalised English league. The Scottish Football League was formed in 1890 and soon became professional. Before long, even the smallest town could boast a football club and the large cities were generally home to several clubs. No religious organisation could afford to overlook the fact that these clubs generated an excitement and a sense of identity which had once been associated with many local churches. None the less, the Free Church's Sub-Committee declined to recommend that the Church should introduce sport as a form of mission. Rather, it insisted that the Church was a spiritual body and that it was "no part of her mission to provide amusement."[105] Possibly not, but the Churches were in danger of isolating

103 Ibid.
104 Ibid., p.17.
105 Ibid., p.18.

themselves if they refused to acknowledge the working classes' desire for organised recreation and thereby allowed them to develop their own forms of entertainment. The Free Church's attitude towards sport was in contrast to that of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. The Catholic Church in Scotland had tried to harness the popularity of football in Scotland by forming specifically Catholic football clubs from 1870.

The rise of half-day hearing and in some cases complete non-attendance was an indication of how the Free Church's congregational strangers' committees had proved of limited value in helping to prevent non-churchgoing. The Free Church General Assembly, however, was still convinced that both duplicate certificates and strangers' committees could help to prevent lapsing if only they were more widely used. Thus, the Committee on Strangers' Committees wanted the Home Mission Committee to give the scheme greater prominence by introducing a Sub-Committee on the Transference of Members and Adherents.[106] Once the Sub-Committee on the Transference of Members and Adherents had been established, it sent a circular to every kirk-session in the Free Church which outlined the existence of duplicate certificates and asked each presbytery to appoint a minister to the post of corresponding member. This officer was given responsibility for communicating with the Sub-Committee and with corresponding members elsewhere in the country. By the General Assembly in 1890, only thirty-nine of the Free Church's seventy-four presbyteries had appointed a corresponding member.[107] However, by the following year, sixty Free Church presbyteries had appointed a corresponding member.[108]

Without question, the biggest problem with duplicate certificates was that they were so seldom used. In fairness, the Sub-Committee realised that ministers were only too happy to blame their colleagues elsewhere in the country for the failure of the duplicate certificate scheme: "Town and country engage in

106 Ibid., (1889) p.125.
107 Ibid., (1890) Appendix iii p. 36.
108 Ibid., (1891) Appendix ii p.24.

unconscious recrimination, each being ready to lay the blame at the other's door."[109] Between 1889-1890, the strangers' committee in Glasgow had only been sent twenty-three certificates which involved forty-six people.[110] If the Synod of Ross and Shetland was to be believed, then not one Free Church member from their area had moved to the city of Glasgow in the past seven years.[111] This was highly unlikely given the level of population movement to Glasgow, but the situation was even more depressing in other towns. Between 1889-1890, the strangers' committees in Edinburgh and Dundee had only investigated ten cases and in Aberdeen the figure was only four.[112] In many cases church members clearly left an area without telling their minister or kirk-session.[113] Experience had shown, however, that ministers and office-bearers could easily discover this information by speaking to an individual's friends and family. As the convener of the strangers' committee in Edinburgh realised: "The great hindrance to our work is the indifference of ministers...Till that is overcome our progress will be slow, and the results unsatisfactory."[114] Despite this warning most ministers continued to overlook their duty to those who had left their congregation. Thus, within a few years the number of cases which strangers' committees were asked to investigate began to decline. In the year ending 31 March 1893, between 5,000-6,000 people were removed from the Free Church's communion roll.[115] Many of these people had died, but there was a general consensus within the Free Church that more had drifted away from the Church.

From these statistics it appeared that the Free Church had not only found it difficult to make any significant impact upon those outwith the Church, but, even more seriously, it had struggled to maintain an adequate hold on those

109 Ibid., (1890) Appendix iii p.37.
110 Ibid.
111 Ibid.
112 Ibid.
113 Ibid., p.38.
114 Ibid., (1891) Appendix iii p.26.
115 Ibid., (1893) Appendix iv p.19.

who were already in the habit of attending church. It was these two factors which were responsible for so much of the anxiety felt by the Free Church in the last quarter of the century. The absence of official statistics on church attendance makes it difficult to determine whether the concerns of ministers were justified. Nevertheless, Churches, newspapers and ministers continued to hold their own investigations into non-churchgoing in an attempt to draw attention to this seemingly intractable problem. Robert Howie, minister of the St. Mary's Free church in Govan, Glasgow, was responsible for one of the most well-known and controversial nineteenth-century investigations into non-churchgoing. Although Howie was a Free Church minister, he did not restrict his investigation to that denomination. It was the breadth of Howie's inquiry which made it appear so authoritative and yet at the same time aroused considerable opposition.

Howie bombarded the Free Church with a relentless stream of statistics in the first half of the 1890s which culminated in the publication of *The Churches and the Churchless in Scotland* in 1893.[116] While Howie stated that his aim was to awaken "fresh interest" in home-mission work, it was also evident that he hoped to show that the Free Church and other denominations had failed the Scottish people.[117] Howie was another Free Church minister who felt that theological controversies had distracted the Free Church from undertaking home-mission work. According to Howie, the largest and most successful Free Church congregations were served by ministers who preached the traditional Scottish Presbyterian message.[118] Like any collection of statistics, Howie's book was open to a number of interpretations and a great deal of caution has to be used when approaching his statistics. Nevertheless, although Howie's findings were by no means without fault, they did succeed in drawing the Church's attention to the problem of non-churchgoing and the difficulties faced by church-

116 R. Howie, *The Churches and the Churchless in Scotland, facts and figures* (Glasgow,1893).
117 Ibid., p.9.
118 Ibid., pp.37-38.

extension programmes in a way which many previous investigations had not.

On the surface at least, it appeared that the Free Church had succeeded in keeping pace with the increase in Scotland's population. The Scottish population had increased by 34% between 1861 and 1891, and Howie maintained that the size of individual congregations had more than managed to keep pace with it. According to Howie, the Free Church's membership had actually increased by 63% during this period.[119] In Scotland as a whole, Howie had calculated that eighty-three in every 1,000 people were connected to the Free Church in 1891. This was significantly better than the United Presbyterians 45:1,000, but poor when compared to the Church of Scotland's 143:1,000.[120] Although Howie claimed that membership of the Free Church had increased faster than the rate of population growth he was disappointed at the way that average church attendance had actually declined. Nevertheless, Howie's statistics revealed that non-churchgoing was increasing at an even faster rate in the Church of Scotland than the Free Church. The Church of Scotland's best attended diet of worship per 1,000 members was 730 in 1876, but only 420 in 1891. In contrast, the Free Church's best attended diet of worship had declined from 996 per 1,000 members in 1876 to only 702 in 1891.[121] If Howie's statistics were reliable then it appeared that the Church of Scotland's decline in church attendance had been even more dramatic than the Free Church's.

Despite the apparent decline in churchgoing in the late nineteenth century, Church membership was actually increasing over the same period. According to Howie, the Church of Scotland's membership had increased by 23% between 1876-1891 and the Free Church's had risen by 22%.[122] Many ordinary church members may have decided that it was no longer necessary to attend

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119 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1891) p.101.
120 Ibid.
121 Ibid., (1894) p.70.
122 Ibid.

church, but the benefits of church membership, notably with relation to occasions concerning births, deaths and marriages were still sufficiently attractive to encourage church connection. Howie treated the Church of Scotland's membership statistics with some suspicion by claiming that the Established Church was less zealous than the Free Church when it came to purging its register of individuals who were no longer connected to the Church either because of death or indifference.[123] Howie's scepticism aroused some anger in the Established Church where he was dismissed as biased.[124] While perhaps not entirely impartial where the Church of Scotland was concerned, Howie was in fact critical of both the Free and Established Churches: he argued, for example, that both denominations had alienated the poorest members of society. In particular, Howie felt his statistics showed that wealthy suburbanites were in "the peculiar care of all the churches."[125] Howie also accused the Free and Established Churches of having needlessly built churches in areas where the population was declining at the expense of areas where the population was increasing. This trend was particularly evident in the Free Church. Between 1881 and 1891, the number of people who lived within the Presbyteries of Lerwick, Burracove, Olnafirth, Dingwall, Skye, Lochcarron, Lorn, Mull, Kintyre, Lanark and Chirnside had fallen from 172,525 to 163,636. Despite the declining population, the Free Church had built eighteen new churches in these eleven Presbyteries, which had, moreover, not prevented the Free Church's membership from declining in these areas.[126]

In contrast, the population in the Presbytery of Glasgow had grown from 731,748 in 1881 to 845,288 in 1891. However, the Free Church had only built four new churches to provide for these 113,540 new additions to Glasgow between

123 R. Howie, *The Churches and the Churchless in Scotland*, p.14.

124 W. Simpson, *Facts and Fictions Concerning the Church of Scotland: a critique of Howie's 'The Churches and the Churchless in Scotland'* (Edinburgh,1894).

125 R. Howie, *The Churches and the Churchless in Scotland*, p.29.

126 Ibid., p.30.

1879-1891, only one church for every 34,062 additional people.[127] There were only ninety-six Free churches within the Presbytery of Glasgow in 1891, or an average of only one church for every 8,805 people. The situation was even worse in the city of Glasgow where the Free Church could only provide one church for every 9,947 people. This lack of church building in Glasgow had not prevented the Free Church's membership in the city from increasing from 36,312 to 45,217 between 1879-1891.[128] The increase in Free Church membership in Glasgow possibly had more to do with the influx of Free Church members into the city from rural areas than any previous church-extension campaign. Similarly, movement of population out of rural areas accounted for the declining Free Church membership in many rural presbyteries. Nevertheless, this could not disguise the fact that the Free Church had underestimated the increase in the urban population in its church building programme. In Edinburgh, the Free Church's periodic church-extension campaigns had created a situation in which there was one Free church for every 5,900 people. Similarly, the Free Church provided one church for every 5,636 people in Aberdeen and one church for every 8,633 people in Dundee.[129] Throughout its history the Free Church had repeatedly stressed its loyalty to Chalmers' territorial plan and his ideal for urban communities of one church for every 2,000 people. Admittedly, Chalmers' plans had been intended in the 1830s for a single, national Church. Nevertheless, Howie's statistics revealed how the Free Church had struggled in recent years to provide for population movement to the large cities: a situation which he considered to be dangerous to the country's social fabric.[130]

It was not only the population movement to the cities that the Free Church had overlooked. Whereas the eight largest urban communities had

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127 Ibid., pp.30-31.

128 Ibid., and *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1891) p.101.

129 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland,* (1891) p.101.

130 Ibid., (1894) p.70.

contained a quarter of the country's population in 1841, the same eight towns were home to a third of the population in 1891. In the 1880s and 1890s shipbuilding began to dominate the Scottish economy in much the same way that textiles had in the first half of the nineteenth century. In turn, the success of the Clyde shipyards led to a growth in the related coal, iron and steel industries. As a result, a large number of people moved to the central belt in order to find employment in these industries. In fact, while Scotland's population had increased by 290,000 between 1885-1895, 220,000 of this increase was to be found in the Presbyteries of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Hamilton and Linlithgow.[131] While population movement and growth had centred upon these areas more than anywhere else, the Free Church had only built twelve churches in the aforementioned four presbyteries between 1885-1895.[132] Population movement to these areas happened remarkably quickly, but it was certainly difficult to make excuses for the Free Church's failure to cater for expanding towns like Motherwell where there was only one Free church for 22,000 people in 1891.[133]

In confronting the lack of church building in large industrial areas, Howie was quick to point an accusing finger at the Highlands. Free Church ministers in the Highlands had claimed for some time that congregations in urban areas received an unfair amount of money to the detriment of their own congregations, but Howie felt such claims had little foundation in reality. Instead, he had calculated that the Free Church had spent £1,163 on mission work for every 100,000 of the population in the Highlands during 1893-1894. In contrast, the Free Church had spent £216 in the Lowlands and £199 in the large towns.[134] Such a discrepancy in expenditure seemed inexplicable when the Lowlands and towns contained 3,622,548 people compared to the five Highland

131 Ibid., (1895) p.52.
132 Ibid.
133 Ibid., (1891) p.101.
134 Ibid., (1894) p.69.

synods which were home to only 403,000 people.[135] The Highlands, with one Free church for every 1,632 people, was the one part of the country which had actually improved on Chalmers' plan of one church for every 2,000 people. This was a significantly better ratio than the one Free church for every 8,440 people in the large towns and the one Free church for every 3,225 people elsewhere in the country.[136] Howie's views were made public at a time when relations between the Highland and Lowland sections of the Free Church had reached an unprecedented low, but Howie was unwilling to let diplomacy get in the way of what he regarded as an injustice.

Howie extended his criticisms to the work of the Home Mission Committee.[137] In particular, he felt the Home Mission Committee had long suffered from a lack of direction. He was especially worried about the way in which the Committee merely dealt with new applications for grants, instead of initiating missionary movements.[138] As a result, many unsuccessful schemes, such as the congregational mission plan, had been allowed to drain the Committee's resources. The decision of the General Assembly to appoint a Special Commission in 1895 to investigate all aspects of the Home Mission Committee's operations was largely a response to Howie's criticisms.[139] An inquiry into the Committee's work was long overdue if the Church's missionary operations were to adapt to the changing nature of Scottish society. The inquiry would include the question of whether or not the territorial system had a future as the century drew to a close and the Free Church moved towards union with the United Presbyterian Church.

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135 Ibid.

136 Ibid.

137 R. Howie, *The Churches and the Churchless in Scotland*, p.37.

138 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1895) p.52.

139 Ibid., p.138.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the impact which Moody and Sankey made upon Scotland during their first visit between 1873 and 1874 had profound consequences for the Free Church's home-mission programme. Whereas it could take years to establish a successful territorial congregation, a revivalist programme which emulated the methods of Moody and Sankey promised to transform a town or city in a relatively short period of time. Some ministers like William Ross sought to combine a territorial ministry with revivalist techniques, but he was an exception. Instead of combining the best of territorial and revivalist methods in the home-mission programme, many within the Free Church were mesmerised by Moody and Sankey's revivalist approach. This continued even after the two Americans returned to Scotland during 1881-1882 and tried to assimilate the territorial principle into their revivalist methods.

While the Free Church's commitment to the territorial system was less evident, the Church of Scotland, inspired in particular by Donald Macleod, embraced territorialism with a new zeal. Before 1874, the territorial system had formed the backbone of the Free Church's home-mission programme and informed its perception as the true, national Church of Scotland. In contrast, the Church of Scotland made good use of territorialism during the 1870s and 1880s in its effort to assert its value to society against the aggressive disestablishment campaign. By reviving the ideal parish system, the Established Church could demonstrate that it remained relevant in an increasingly pluralistic society. The fact that the Church of Scotland was not disestablished, was is in no small measure due to the Church's territorial outreach during the 1870s and 1880s.

The Church of Scotland thus managed to reassert its value as an Established Church at a time when its position was in great danger. At the same time the Free Church appeared to be distancing itself from large sections of the

Scottish public. The Free Church's preoccupation with union discussions, the disestablishment campaign, theological controversies and internal disputes served to distract both ministers and members from the value of home-mission work. While many of these issues had to be confronted sooner or later, it was unfortunate that the Free Church did not realise that such an environment meant that it was even more important for the Church to reaffirm its commitment to the work of ingathering. Further, the Free Church's growing commitment to social criticism was an admirable attempt to place the Church at the centre of the social reform movement. But it was a potentially dangerous policy if the Church did not make an equally strong commitment to ensuring that it was physically present among the people whose social conditions they were trying to improve. After all, the working class had political parties which were determined to improve their social environment. The Free Church's recent neglect of mission work was also particularly dangerous when all the Free Church's investigations into non-churchgoing seemed to indicate that the working class were becoming increasingly alienated from the Church, and even those who were still in the habit of attending appeared to have adopted a more flexible attitude towards church attendance. Members of the working class who were outwith the Church, but were interested in their own social improvement, were likely to find that the variety of socialist organisations which were formed in the 1880s reflected their values and aspirations more accurately than any Church.

The environment which existed in the Free Church in the early 1890s only made Robert Howie's subsequent impact upon the Church appear even more remarkable. By bringing an unprecedented level of statistical data to bear on the complex question of home-mission and church-extension work, Howie showed the Free Church how its dwindling fortunes had coincided with a reduced commitment to home-mission work and with a church-extension programme

which had overlooked both population movement to towns and population movement out of Old Town areas to new suburban districts. As we will see in the next chapter, Howie's investigations led to the appointment of a long overdue Special and Representative Commission on Home Mission Work in 1895. Howie's call for more churches also led to church-extension campaigns in many of the largest urban areas, which were intended to make up the shortfall in the Free Church's church provision since the mid-1870s. The Free Church was about to reaffirm its commitment to one of its earliest principles - the territorial ideal - at a time when it was finally set to complete its union with the United Presbyterian Church, a denomination which operated on a gathered Church principle.

CHAPTER EIGHT

AN OLD IDEA FOR A NEW CENTURY, 1895-1900

When the Free Church celebrated its Jubilee in 1893 its ministers and members had good reason to be proud of what the denomination had achieved. In total, it was estimated that the Free Church had received £23,352,802 in donations over the previous fifty years.[1] This money had enabled the Free Church to present itself to the Scottish people as an alternative national Church of Scotland. By the end of 1892, the Free Church had 1,047 ordained charges and 1,166 ministers.[2] It had established itself as a significant force in the country's religious life. However, the celebration of the Church's jubilee coincided with a renewed crisis and a disruption. Some kind of schism had been threatened for a number of years, but that did not make the split in 1892, leading to the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church, any less painful. At a time when Free Church leaders were working for Presbyterian union, their own denomination appeared to be disintegrating. There could be little disputing the fact, moreover, that most of the Free Church's progress had been achieved in the first half of the denomination's lifetime. From the late 1870s the Free Church's programme suffered from a lack of direction.

As we have seen, it was Robert Howie of the St. Mary's Free church in Govan, Glasgow, more than anybody else, who managed to persuade the Free Church that it lacked clear policies on such matters as church building and home-mission work. Howie presented statistical evidence to the Free Church in the early 1890s to support his view that the Free Church had betrayed its evangelistic origins. Howie was particularly concerned that the Free Church had failed to provide enough churches for the growing population in the central belt.

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1 J.R. Fleming, *A History of the Church in Scotland 1875-1929* (Edinburgh,1933), p.188.

2 G. Buchanan Ryley, *Scotland's Free Church* (London,1893), p.389.

Although a member of the Home Mission Committee, Howie was highly critical of that Committee's work. Significantly, his criticisms were widely recognised to be valid. Rather than take the initiative, the Home Mission Committee had been content to leave local groups with the responsibility for developing new home-mission policy on an ad hoc basis. When local organisations attempted to undertake new home-mission campaigns, such as the Presbytery of Glasgow's campaign in 1888, they generally failed to have lasting success. More than anything else, this was due to the lack of an overall plan which could operate in the long-term. Without an overall plan, it was difficult to see how the Free Church could make any impact on those outwith the Church. The Free Church's home-mission programme had been most successful in the 1850s and 1860s when it had a defined territorial plan and when both the Home Mission and Glasgow Evangelisation Committees were willing to take the lead in encouraging the plan. By the 1890s, it was therefore clear that something had to be done to revive the Free Church's home-mission work.

When the Assembly agreed to appoint a Special and Representative Commission to investigate all aspects of the Home Mission Committee's operations, it represented an unprecedented but long overdue decision. The nature of Scottish society had been completely transformed during the previous fifty-two years while the Committee's role remained ostensibly what it had been in the late 1840s. When the Free Church was formed the majority of people in Scotland lived in a rural environment and worked in agriculture. In the 1890s, most people lived in an urban environment and the Scottish economy was dominated by the heavy and labour intensive shipbuilding, coal, iron and steel industries. Occasionally, the Home Mission Committee had tried to respond to changes in both society and the economy by introducing new schemes such as the Miners' Mission Fund in 1873. Unfortunately for the Free Church, such innovations were the exception rather than the rule. On the whole, the

Committee had restricted itself to dispensing grants rather than making sure that the money was spent effectively. This behaviour was particularly dangerous when the Committee was receiving less and less money each year from its annual collections.

Consequently, the Free Church looked to the Special Commission to find out how the Home Mission Committee could take a more direct and effective lead in evangelising the Scottish people. The Commission consisted of twenty-one ministers and twelve elders, under the convenership of James Hood Wilson: a firm supporter of territorialism.[3] In the nine months prior to December 1895 some 2,971 names were removed from the Free Church's communion role and it was clear that something had to be done to arrest what most ministers regarded as a sorrowful state of affairs.[4] The Free Church's decision to set up a Special Commission was also motivated by the impressive work undertaken by the Established Church's Commission on the Religious Condition of the People.[5] By conducting its own investigation, the Free Church hoped to show that it could be just as responsive to the country's needs as the Church of Scotland. The aim of the Free Church's Special and Representative Commission was threefold. First, to discover whether the denomination's home-mission programme could be made more effective to the country's requirements. Secondly, to encourage every congregation to be aggressive. Thirdly, to ascertain whether or not the Home Mission Committee should reconsider the entire policy of grants in aid.[6]

In its report, the Commission pointed out that unemployment in large towns, the bothy system in rural areas, drunkenness and the relatively new difficulty of sabbath labour were all partly responsible for encouraging non-

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3 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1895) p.138.
4 Ibid., (1896) Appendix iii a p.10.
5 Ibid., (1895) p.51.
6 Ibid., (1896) Appendix iii a p.10.

churchgoing.[7] In general, the Commission steered clear of making any radical pronouncements on the nature of the social system. Nevertheless, it did reveal some interesting insights into home-mission work. In particular, the Commission directed attention to the apparent reluctance of ordinary members to undertake mission work. There was little point looking at how the Free Church could expand its home-mission operations if there was a shortage of members willing to undertake the work. Residential segregation and class animosities may have explained why many people were reluctant to undertake such work. Further, many Church members had become disenchanted with the kind of denominational rivalry which had characterised home-mission work between 1843 and 1873. Indeed, a growing number now offered their services to the plethora of non-denominational organisations which were a feature of home-mission work in the last quarter of the century. During its investigation, the Commission was told about one non-denominational organisation whose sixteen voluntary workers were either members or adherents of the Free Church.[8] The Free Church had received ample warning in the past that it was in danger of losing the support of ordinary members to organisations which were willing to give them a more active role in the work of evangelization. Whereas the large Presbyterian Churches seemed determined to maintain the status of the ordained ministry at all costs, organisations like the Plymouth Brethren, Wesleyan Methodists and Salvation Army had been only too willing to recruit and train lay evangelists. It was no coincidence that many of these groups enjoyed a high level of growth in the last quarter of the century. In response, the Commission observed that "It is easy enough to talk about the crypto-Plymouthism of some of the outside agencies, but the best cure for any kind of Plymouthism is to give every one something to do and to let those who can speak do it to their heart's content."[9] It would have been more to the point if the

7 Ibid., p.2.
8 Ibid., p.1.
9 Ibid., p.60.

Commission had made some practical recommendations about how the Free Church might employ lay evangelists. Although the Home Mission Committee did go on to employ lay evangelists, there were only six men in this office in 1899. Between them, they visited ninety-nine congregations and held 1,458 meetings.[10] Congregations no doubt welcomed their visits, but the small number of lay evangelist positions available was unlikely to prevent the continual drift of enthusiastic Church members into non-denominational organisations.

When it came to making recommendations about future home-mission policy, it was evident that the Commission wanted the Free Church to return to its traditional methods of home-mission. In a ringing endorsement of the territorial plan, the Commission claimed that both the Home Mission Committee and the individual presbyteries had a duty to encourage each congregation to undertake mission work within a well defined territory.[11] Moreover, the Commission wanted each rural presbytery to draw up a list of new arrivals to their area every six months so that they could be visited in an effort to prevent them from lapsing.[12]

The Commission also wanted the Home Mission Committee to introduce a class of preaching deputies who would travel throughout the country.[13] It will be recalled that this policy had first been tried in the 1850s. However, the previous deputies' programme had encountered difficulties after only a few years because ministers were reluctant to spend a few weeks each summer in deputy work. None the less, the Commission hoped that the Free Church's best ministers would agree to be deputies in the 1890s. The Commission was convinced that people who did not ordinarily go to church would be willing to attend if a famous author, minister or professor were to deliver the sermon. The

10 Ibid., (1900) Appendix iii p.26.
11 Ibid., (1896) Appendix iii a p.3.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., p.4.

Commission also felt that deputies would be able to inspire the people to act as volunteers in congregational agencies.[14]

It was one thing for the Commission to make proposals regarding future home-mission policy, but the Commission also had to form an administrative framework so that its recommendations could be implemented. Thus, the Commission proposed a thorough overhaul of the Home Mission Committee and recommended measures which would give presbyteries a greater say in formulating home-mission policy. The Commission wanted each presbytery to appoint a Home Mission corresponding member.[15] This individual was to communicate with those involved in home-mission work within his territory and start new mission movements within the presbytery. The Commission also wanted each corresponding member to send regular reports to the Home Mission Committee so that the Assembly's Committee would know how the Church's home-mission programme was progressing.[16] The Commission hoped to see the Home Mission Committee develop along the lines of an intelligence department which would find out which were the most successful forms of aggressive mission work.[17] Furthermore, the Commission felt the Home Mission Committee would be more effective if it were divided into four departments. It would be the first department's responsibility to find out how the Church's home-mission programme was developing throughout the country. In a similar vein, the Commission wanted this department to encourage others by holding conferences and public meetings on home-mission work. It was also hoped that this department would publish papers containing the details of successful home-mission experiments.[18] The second Home Mission Committee department was to deal with the Committee's finances.[19] If the Commission's

14 Ibid., pp.60-61.
15 Ibid., Appendix iii a p.3.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid., p.4.
19 Ibid.

recommendations were accepted then the third department would carry on the work of the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals.[20] This suggestion was largely inspired by a feeling that it had become increasingly difficult to define precisely where each Committees jurisdiction lay. Although this particular suggestion was ultimately rejected, many of the Free Church's younger ministers who were tired of the Home Mission Committee's "sluggishness" felt the situation would only be improved if it was amalgamated with the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals to form a Life and Work Committee.[21] In turn, it would be up to this department to encourage every congregation to be aggressive and also arrange the preaching deputies' programme.[22] Finally, the fourth department was to look after the variety of other work which the Committee was responsible for such as the Miners' Mission Fund, work among fisherfolk and summer visitors and the work connected to the Transference of Members and Adherents.[23] These changes would not require any increase in the number of members of the Home Mission Committee, but the Commission hoped to get round the problem of having members who did nothing by insisting that each member should be a member of at least one department: preferably one in which they had specialised knowledge.[24]

Although the Commission recognised that several towns, generally those in the central belt, required new church building campaigns, the Commission felt that the Free Church's main problem lay in filling existing churches rather than erecting additional church buildings.[25] Poor church attendance reflected the increasingly flexible attitude which many people had adopted towards churchgoing. During its investigation, the Commission discovered, when all

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20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., p.55. This was an indication of how impressed sections of the Free Church were with the work of the Church of Scotland's Life and Work Committee.

22 Ibid., Appendix iii a p.4.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid., p.5.

25 Ibid., p.58.

denominations were included, that there was one church for every 880 people in Scotland.[26] The Free Church had never managed to reach Chalmers' ideal for urban communities of one church for every 2,000 people, but it appeared that nobody had to travel for more than two and a half miles before they encountered a Free church which in itself was an incredible achievement.[27] As far as the Home Mission Committee was concerned, however, the Free Church could not afford to leave any part of the country without ordinances if it claimed to be the true, national Church of Scotland.[28] It had been some time since the majority of people within the Free Church had regarded the denomination as Scotland's national Church. The fact that the Committee felt that the Church had a duty to behave like a national Church showed just how difficult it was for the Free Church to decide precisely where its responsibility lay.

Given that Robert Howie had done so much to encourage the formation of the Special Commission, it is appropriate to consider how he received the investigation's findings. Overall, he was pleased with the Commission's report, though he would have liked the Commission to have been more explicit in encouraging congregations to be aggressive in their home mission.[29] However, Howie was not happy with the suggestion that the Commission should be reappointed, and instead he recommended that the Commission should be amalgamated with the Home Mission Committee.[30] Howie was unhappy about the way that the Commission had been criticising the Home Mission Committee and felt the two organisations were bound to collide if this situation was allowed to continue.[31] This may have been true, but the fact that Howie was due to take over the convenership of the Committee after the Assembly in 1896 should not be overlooked. In any event, Howie was pleased when the Commission accepted

26 Ibid., (1897) Appendix iii p.8.
27 Ibid., p.7.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., (1896) p.62.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.

his recommendation that the Home Mission Committee should have a wider outlook.[32]

The Home Mission Committee recommended few alterations to the Commission's report which was an indication of how conservative a measure it was.[33] It is difficult to imagine how anybody, other than supporters of territorialism, could possibly be pleased with the Commission's recommendations. As we have seen, the deputies' plan had been tried before and its failure was largely due to ministerial indifference. There was no evidence to suggest that ministers were any more enthusiastic to undertake that kind of mission work in the last decade of the century than they had been in the 1860s, only a few years after the revival of 1859-1862. Moreover, the Sub-Committee on the Transference of Members and Adherents had been trying for a number of years to prevent those who had recently arrived in cities and large towns from lapsing. This policy had only achieved limited success largely because of a lack of ministerial enthusiasm. Admittedly, the Commission recommended that this plan should be restricted to rural areas. Yet these districts were not where the problems of lapsing and non-churchgoing were most acute.

It was appropriate that James Hood Wilson was Moderator of the Free Church General Assembly in the year that the Free Church decided to appoint a Special Commission to investigate all aspects of home-mission work. Wilson had been responsible for one of the Free Church's most successful territorial missions at Fountainbridge in Edinburgh during the 1850s and 1860s. Whereas many territorial congregations no longer took any interest in home-mission matters after their congregation became an independent sanctioned charge, the Fountainbridge congregation went on to encourage territorial missions in Gorgie and Morningside even after the congregation had left Fountainbridge to form the Barclay church. It was perhaps not surprising, therefore, that Wilson focused

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., (1897) p.142 and Appendix iii pp.28-29.

his opening and closing addresses to the Assembly on the subject of mission work.[34] Unlike many of his contemporaries, who felt that the Churches were no longer active in the mission field to the extent they once had been, Wilson argued that: "All the Churches are now more alive than once they were to the need of such work and to the duty of engaging in it."[35] Nevertheless, Wilson questioned "whether the Churches have done more than hold their own, or have made any material inroad upon the masses of population outside their pale."[36]

Like so many areas of its home-mission policy in the early 1890s, the Free Church was determined to reaffirm its commitment to mining areas. In 1873, Wilson had been instrumental in encouraging the Free Church to establish a Miners' Mission Fund. With the £30,000 raised for this fund the Free Church had been able to establish mission halls and churches in a number of mining areas whose growth had been spectacular since the mid-nineteenth century. The decision to create a separate Miners' Mission Fund was vindicated when many of these congregations became some of the Free Church's healthiest churches. As a result of their work among miners, Wilson felt the Free Church had received "from their ranks some of our best office-bearers and ablest ministers."[37] Nevertheless, Wilson recognised that "as a class, they were for long sadly neglected, and though much has been done for them of late, a few years will not repair the neglect of generations."[38] While the Miners' Mission Fund had achieved some impressive results, it was clear that there was only so much that could be achieved with £30,000. In fact, the fund was exhausted in the mid-1890s and the Home Mission Committee had to take over the supervision of mining areas.[39] At a time when the Home Mission Committee hardly had enough

34 Ibid., (1895) pp.2-13 and pp.218-231.
35 Ibid., p.3.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid., p.5.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.

money available to oversee the work which it was already responsible for, there was a distinct possibility that mining areas would suffer as a direct consequence of being included in the Home Mission Committee's operations. The Miners' Mission Fund may have been exhausted, but that did not stop the growth of existing mining areas or the need to look after the spiritual welfare of their inhabitants. In an attempt to undertake a fresh initiative in mining areas, the Free Church General Assembly accepted a proposal to establish a new Miners' Mission Fund in 1895 which hoped to raise £15,000.[40]

The Free Church required a renewed commitment to mining areas, but it was clear that the Church also had to address other aspects of its home-mission policy. The Special Commission's investigation had looked at the work undertaken by congregational missions. In what was a direct condemnation of the congregational mission plan, the Special Commission felt that the Free Church would only reach lapsed artisans and those slightly higher on the social scale if it employed Probationer Assistants who would visit them on a regular basis.[41] Since they were introduced in 1868, congregational missions had proved to be a controversial aspect of the Free Church's home-mission programme. Between 1868 and 1896 a succession of ministers had expressed their concern during home-mission debates at how congregational missions failed to address the problem of non-churchgoing. Despite their reservations, the number of congregational missions had continued to increase. In turn, congregational missions received a larger proportion of the Committee's expenditure. This would have been excusable if congregational missions had led to a large increase in church membership, but it was a ridiculous policy when pressure on the Committee's income meant that it could ill afford expenditure on areas which did not offer value for money. In 1896, the Free Church had supported 106 congregational missions in twenty-four presbyteries. It cost the Home Mission

40 Ibid., p.52.

41 Ibid., (1896) Appendix iii a p.2.

Committee £2,403 to support these congregational missions which made them the Committee's largest single item of expenditure.[42] This is not to suggest that congregational missions were a complete irrelevance however. In 1897, it was calculated that the 106 congregational missions had a collective attendance of 13,380 for a Sunday evening service. While congregational missions received almost £7,000 from the Home Mission Committee and donations, they raised and spent a further £2,619 themselves.[43] Perhaps more importantly, congregational missions encouraged participation in voluntary work at a time when many Church members had either lost interest in home-mission work or had joined non-denominational organisations. The 106 congregational missions employed 109 agents, 2,430 tract distributors and 3,113 sabbath school teachers and monitors.[44] At first sight, these statistics appeared to vindicate the Home Mission Committee's outlay on congregational missions. Nevertheless, John Sloan, the Home Mission Committee's convener, admitted in 1895 that they contributed little to the Church's "strength and efficiency."[45]

Many of the problems which congregational missions experienced were related to the kind of people who were given responsibility for overseeing them. Of the 109 agents employed at congregational missions, only two were ministers, thirty-seven were probationers, twenty-three were catechists and forty-seven were students.[46] The fact that students formed the largest single group responsible for running congregational missions was a matter of concern for those who were responsible for their academic development. George Adam Smith, Professor of Language and Literature at the Free Church's College in Glasgow, felt that the Free Church had placed an unjustified level of confidence in congregational missions. Instead of being a source of strength, Smith argued

42 Ibid., Appendix iii p.1.
43 Ibid., (1897) Appendix iii p.25.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid., (1895) p.47.
46 Ibid., (1896) Appendix iii p.1.

that congregational missions were "often a source of enfeeblement and exhaustion of Christian hope and strength for effort."[47] It was the inexperience of those who conducted congregational missions, more than anything else, which Smith claimed was responsible for the failure of congregational missions. In 1898, forty-four of the seventy-eight students at the Glasgow Free Church College were employed either as Congregational Assistants or as missionaries at congregational missions.[48] The students' desire to be involved in a home-mission programme was commendable, but the work they were responsible for at congregational missions was not far removed from what would be expected of them when they finally became ministers at sanctioned charges. Given that congregational missions were often some of the Free Church's poorest congregations and situated in the most socially disadvantaged areas, there was certainly a danger that young students would be overwhelmed by the scenes they witnessed. Instead of encouraging students to perform mission work throughout their careers, there was a distinct possibility that students would be disillusioned after their experiences at congregational missions. As Smith recognised, the time students spent conducting congregational missions detracted from their studies and this would damage the Free Church's ministry in the long run.[49] It also appeared that many congregations in the west end of Glasgow only employed students at their congregational mission because they were cheaper than probationers.[50] If the Church was determined to reduce non-churchgoing then its wealthiest congregations had to realise that it could not be achieved on the cheap.

If the truth be told, the Free Church had been naive in not recognising the possible dangers of placing too much emphasis on congregational missions. Originally, it will be recalled, congregational missions had been intended to

47 Ibid., (1898) p.81.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.

provide for those areas where the existing Free Church had insufficient accommodation for all those who wanted to attend. At the time, this seemed a practical solution to the lack of churches which did not require any immediate expenditure on building churches. From the outset, however, congregational missions were never intended to develop into independent, sanctioned charges and this soon became their inherent weakness. It was difficult to see how any mission could thrive if it was denied the chance to progress into a sanctioned, self-supporting charge. When Chalmers began his West Port experiment, only forty-five of 411 families in the area had a Protestant church connection, but the congregation eventually grew to 1,100 communicants. Similarly, Wilson's Barclay congregation had its origins in an upper room in Fountainbridge with twenty-six members. Humble origins indeed, but when Wilson left to form the Barclay church the Fountainbridge congregation consisted of 1,180 members. No doubt those responsible for preaching at a territorial mission as well as the members of a congregation's voluntary agency derived a great deal of pleasure in watching them develop from humble origins to become thriving and healthy congregations. Congregational missions would have perhaps fulfilled a more worthwhile role if they had been feeder congregations for the existing Free church in an area. Instead, congregational missions had an overwhelming tendency to become 'pauper' congregations where the poorest in an area gathered in a small hall, while the 'parent' church was crowded with an area's respectable inhabitants or by those who lived elsewhere and only visited the district to attend church. Although the territorial plan was far from perfect, it had attempted to encourage an element of cooperation and benevolence between the classes. In contrast, congregational missions merely served to entrench the existing class divisions within society.

The fear among 'parent' congregations that congregational missions were their rivals, particularly when they had sealing ordinances, was another reason

why most congregational missions were so weak.[51] When congregational missions were first introduced there could be little disputing the fact that they were needed in those areas where the existing Free Church building was overcrowded. Over time, however, many 'parent' congregations found their own membership greatly reduced either because of lapsing or because their members had joined other congregations having moved to new areas of the city. Consequently, many 'parent' churches came to view their congregational missions with some suspicion.

The prevalence of congregational missions in the largest towns was one of the reasons why less emphasis was placed on the aggressive territorial method. In 1896, the Home Mission Committee gave grants to support forty-eight congregational missions in Glasgow, eighteen in Edinburgh, three in Dundee and four in Aberdeen.[52] Meanwhile, not one territorial mission in either of these cities received a grant from the Home Mission Committee. Admittedly, there was nothing to prevent a congregational mission from being conducted on the territorial principle, but this rarely occurred.

On becoming convener of the Home Mission Committee, Robert Howie was quick to change the nature of congregational missions by making them feeders rather than rivals to their 'parent' congregations, which meant that members would later become part of the 'parent' church when they were considered ready, in much the same way that the Pioneers Missions operated at the Cowcaddens church.[53] The Committee also tried to reduce the role of students in congregational missions. Instead, it asked the General Assembly of 1897 to provide funds in order to employ salaried Probationer Assistants. By asking the Assembly to reduce the size of the grant given to each probationer from £45 to £35, the Committee hoped that it would be able to employ more

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51 Ibid., (1899) Appendix iii p.10.
52 Ibid., (1896) Appendix iii p.1.
53 Ibid., (1897) Appendix iii p.25.

probationers rather than students at congregational missions.[54] This policy did not prove an immediate success however. While 'parent' congregations recognised the drawbacks of employing students, they also realised that probationers were more interested in looking for a sanctioned charge.[55]

Robert Howie's commitment to reversing the Free Church's fortunes in the early 1890s had convinced the General Assembly to set up a Special Commission to look at how the Church conducted its home-mission programme. He also persuaded a number of local groups to look at launching their own church-extension programmes. Many of these local organisations may have already reached the conclusion that their town or city required more churches, but it was Howie's statistics which confirmed that the Free Church could not afford to wait any longer before launching another church-extension programme. Howie's argument centred upon a belief that the Free Church had built churches in rural districts where the population was declining at the expense of those areas where the population was actually growing. Between 1850 and 1879 the Free Church had built churches faster than it gained members with the result that the average number of members per congregation fell. Although not necessarily a bad thing, this explained the Free Church's decision after 1881 to concentrate on church filling rather than church building.[56] Nevertheless, a disproportionate amount of church building after 1881 took place in rural areas. It was certainly difficult to justify this policy given that the population in large towns had increased by 500,000 between 1881-1897 whereas the number of people who lived in rural areas had declined by 90,000.[57] Similarly, this programme did not make sense when the Free Church's ministry was financed by having rural ministers subsidised by urban congregations. No doubt rural congregations appreciated the benefits of church building, but there was a distinct possibility

54 Ibid., pp.21-22.

55 Ibid., (1898) Appendix iii p.20.

56 C.G. Brown, *The Social History of Religion In Scotland since 1730* (London,1987), pp.177-178.

57 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (September 1,1897) p.208.

that their ministers' salaries would decline in the long-term if the needs of urban areas were overlooked. Any Church which hoped to be healthy in the future could not afford to overlook the needs of the large cities. In 1897, Robert Howie warned the Free Church not to overlook the largest towns whose "influence either for good or evil is becoming every year more potent, and the church that neglects them adopts a most suicidal policy."[58]

Since 1881 the Free Church had built sixteen new churches in the Highlands despite the fact that the area's population had fallen by 9,000.[59] This church building may have been an attempt to placate the disaffected Highland elements within the Free Church, but it was a waste of the Church's resources at a time when the Church no longer received the level of financial support in real terms which it did immediately after the Disruption. The Free Church had built three churches in the thirty-one Lowland presbyteries which contained neither large towns or mining areas, even though the population in these presbyteries had declined by 34,000.[60] In contrast, the Free Church had only built twenty-two new churches in the country's thirteen mining areas where the population had increased by 187,000. Similarly, only six new churches had been erected in the eight largest towns. The Free Church's failure to cater for expanding towns was inexplicable given that the population in these large urban centres had increased by 314,000.[61] In fact, the Free Church had not built one new church in Aberdeen, Greenock or Perth, even though the number of people who lived in these towns had increased by 50,000. The situation was little better in Paisley where only one Free church had been built for a population which had risen by 19,000.[62] Moreover, the Free Church had erected only two new churches in Edinburgh and Leith despite the fact that the population had risen by 62,000.[63] The demand

58 Ibid., p.209.
59 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1898) p.66.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid., p.67.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid.

for churches in these towns, however, paled into insignificance when compared to the need for new church building in Glasgow.[64]

As far as Howie was concerned, most of the problems which the Free Church encountered in Glasgow were due to the lack of church building which the Church had undertaken between 1879-1895. This meant that the Free Church had failed to build upon the good work undertaken by the Glasgow Church Building Society. Between 1871-1881, Robert Buchanan, as convener of the Glasgow Church Building Society, had overseen the erection of twenty-two new churches and the addition of four churches after amalgamation with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1876.[65] Instead of maintaining this impressive rate of church building, the Free Church had built only four new churches after 1881 - and this despite the fact that the city's population had increased by 174,999.[66] This meant that the Free Church had erected only one new church for every 43,749 people added to the city's population over the previous sixteen years. Consequently, the Free Church could only offer one church for every 9,830 people in Glasgow and its suburbs.[67] As we have seen, there had been little church building in other large towns in Scotland, but the six largest towns were able to offer one Free church for every 6,905 people: a vast improvement on the situation in Glasgow.[68]

Howie calculated that the Free Church would need to build twelve new churches in Glasgow at an estimated cost of £84,000 between 1895-1900 if it was to compensate for the lack of church building which had taken place after 1881.[69] This would make up for the shortfall in churches which had arisen over the previous sixteen years, but it would not put Glasgow on a par with other large towns. The Free Church would need to build thirty-six new churches if it was to

64 Ibid.
65 Ibid., p.70.
66 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly,* (April 1,1896) p.80.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid., (December 2,1895) p.287.

offer the same ratio of churches to people as the other large towns in Scotland.[70]

In line with the city's Evangelical tradition, Glasgow was the first city to accept Howie's call for a renewed church-extension effort. In order to raise money for a new church-extension campaign, Lord Overtoun, one of the Free Church's most generous benefactors, decided to reconstitute the Glasgow Church Building Society in October 1895 and demonstrated his own commitment to the scheme by donating £5,000.[71] The Society aimed to raise £30,000 for a Central Fund which would be distributed in grants, while it hoped that individual congregations could raise another £54,000. The Central Fund was to be run by a Board of Directors, made up of all those who gave more than £100. It was their responsibility to ensure that churches were only built where they were needed. The Board would not sanction any grant until the local promoters had raised at least £3,000.[72] This was a large amount to expect people to raise at a time when the Scottish economy was still in a depression. Unlike previous church-extension campaigns, however, the churches planned by the Glasgow Church Building Society in the 1890s were intended for affluent middle-class areas which would have less difficulty in raising such a sum.

As was usually the case when the Free Church undertook a new church-extension campaign in Glasgow, those responsible for raising money did their best to impress upon the rest of the country just how important it was to look after the spiritual welfare of the largest and economically most important city in Scotland. Howie, for example, asserted that "it can scarcely be denied that the moral and spiritual condition of a community so vast and so rapidly increasing as Glasgow and suburbs, must powerfully affect that of the whole country, even as the state of the heart affects the extremities of the body."[73] Howie also claimed

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70 Ibid., (April 1,1896) p.81.

71 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1897) Appendix iii p.15 and p.18.

72 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (April 1,1896) p.81.

73 Ibid., p.80.

that Free Church members in Glasgow had subsidised the Church's operations elsewhere in the country for some time. He pointed out that Free Church members in Glasgow had raised £35,354 for the Church Extension Building Fund, most of which had been spent providing churches in other areas while church building in Glasgow had largely ground to a standstill.[74] Furthermore, it was Glasgow which Howie claimed had given two-thirds of the money raised in the 1870s for the Miners' Mission Fund and the city was once again contributing the largest sums of money to the recently relaunched Miners' Mission Fund.[75]

Howie's effort to persuade people in other areas to contribute towards church extension in Glasgow might have been more successful if he had drawn their attention to the pockets of shocking poverty in the city. As the century drew to a close, it was clear that Glasgow still contained some of the most deep-rooted social problems in Scotland, which greater local authority intervention had failed to eradicate. The Glasgow Town Council had become increasingly interventionist during the 1890s. In 1894, the Town Council took the running of the trams out of the hands of inefficient private companies and provided the money to electrify the system in 1898. Similarly, between 1890-1900, the Town Council municipalised electricity, sewage purification, libraries and telephones, and also established museums, art galleries and golf courses.[76] The fact that the Town Council's programme of municipalisation was encouraged by the social gospel movement indicated that religious influences could still be felt on secular authorities.[77] In 1893-1894, forty of the Glasgow Council's seventy-four members were supporters of the Scottish Permissive Bill and Temperance Association.[78] The Town Council also passed a declaration in 1890 which declared that there

74 Ibid., p.81.

75 Ibid.

76 T. Hart, 'Urban Growth and Municipal Government: Glasgow in a Comparative Context (1846-1914)', in A. Slaven and D.H. Aldcroft, (eds.), *Business, Banking and Urban History* (Edinburgh,1982), pp.197-198.

77 Ibid., p.203.

78 B. Aspinwall, *Portable Utopia: Glasgow and the United States 1820-1920* (Aberdeen,1984), p.140.

would be no licensed premises on the Council's property.[79]

The Town Council's interventionist policies had inspired other local authorities, but it had done little to remove many of the city's social problems. Despite the Town Council's programme of slum clearance and house-building, in April 1896, some 52,800 families or 30.7% of all families in Glasgow lived in houses of only one room.[80] In contrast, only 21.7% of the population in Edinburgh and Leith lived in houses of only one room. These statistics underlined just how poor Glasgow was compared to other towns in Scotland. When the Free Church's Home Mission Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to investigate the Religious Needs of the Very Poor, it calculated that approximately 100,000 people in the city could be thus described.[81] Building churches would do nothing to tackle the problem of poverty in Glasgow, but Robert Howie felt the Church's fortunes in the city depended upon another church-extension plan. According to Howie, the Free Church's membership in Glasgow had increased by 15,921 between 1881-1898 at an average of 173 per congregation.[82] Howie believed that this increase was largely a consequence of the twenty-six churches which were added to the Free Church's church provision in the city between 1871-1881: a clear sign that Howie saw the growth in a denomination's membership as a direct consequence of church building.[83] However, Howie calculated that only 769 new members were added to the Church between the Assemblies in 1897 and 1898. This was 178 less than the average annual increase over the previous sixteen years.[84] If Howie had been less impetuous he might have waited a few years to see whether this trend would continue. Instead, he argued that only more church building would

79 E. King, 'Popular Culture in Glasgow', in R.A. Cage, (ed.), *The Working Class in Glasgow 1750-1914*, p.143.

80 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (April 1,1896) p.81.

81 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1900) p.124.

82 Ibid., (1898) p.70.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.

increase the Free Church's membership.[85]

By April 1896 a total of £22,150 had been raised for the Central Fund. This was a significant sum, but Howie was disappointed by the fact that this money had been subscribed by only 161 people. Furthermore, £15,506 of this sum had been raised by people who either lived in Glasgow or had businesses in the city which, Howie felt, showed that people were not sufficiently committed to Glasgow's needs.[86] Given the Free Church's precarious future, the amount of money raised was quite remarkable. People who had no intention of joining a Church formed after union with the United Presbyterian Church would have had ample justification if they had been unwilling to contribute towards churches which might become part of another denomination's property after only a few years. Similarly, Free Church members who did intend joining a post-union Church could not have been oblivious to the debate over which section of the Free Church could expect to retain the Church's property in the aftermath of a schism.

Despite the impressive amount of money it raised, the Building Society was hampered by the improved economic environment in the second half of the 1890s which led to an increase in building costs. In the mid-1870s the British economy entered into a long-term depression which lasted until the mid-1890s. It was, therefore, unfortunate for the Free Church that a trade revival coincided with a period of renewed church building. Although the Central Fund promised to provide grants of £2,500 for each church building, it proved difficult for the Society to attract suitable ministers to new churches, largely because ministers were reluctant to take over churches which would be burdened from the start with a large debt.[87]

As with previous church-extension campaigns, many people were possibly unwilling to contribute to the Glasgow Society in the 1890s because they felt that

85 Ibid. See also R. Gill, *The Myth of the Empty Church* (London,1993).

86 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (April 1,1896) p.81.

87 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1898) p.70.

building new churches only succeeded in weakening existing congregations. This objection may have had some relevance in the past when churches were built within close proximity of existing congregations, but it was hardly valid in the 1890s when the churches were intended for areas of the city where there was next to no church provision. Many Free Church members and ministers also felt that church extension was one of the reasons why contributions to the Sustentation Fund had fallen in recent years. Howie flatly rejected this accusation with his usual battery of statistics.[88] While admitting that declining contributions to the Sustentation Fund had been greatest in the eight largest towns, he pointed out that only seven new churches had been erected in these areas between 1881 and 1897 compared to forty-three elsewhere in the country. Although contributions to the Sustentation Fund had declined from £59,520 to £55,482 or 6.8% in the eight largest towns, Howie calculated that they had fallen by 0.6%, £103,099 to £102,499 elsewhere.[89] Therefore, Howie calculated that it was the lack of church building which had been responsible for falling contributions to the Sustentation Fund in the largest towns. Conversely, he argued that it was greater church building which explained why contributions to the Sustentation Fund had fallen by such a small amount in other areas of the country.[90]

Howie's desire to draw attention to the problem of non-churchgoing in Glasgow was given added authority in January 1897 when *The Christian Leader* published the findings of a census it had previously undertaken on church attendance in the city on 11 October 1896.[91] If the census was reliable, it appeared that the Free Church had the largest attendance per 1,000 members at each service and the largest attendance per 1,000 of the population of the three largest Presbyterian denominations.[92] This may have been a cause for rejoicing, but any

88 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (February 1,1898) pp.37-38.

89 Ibid. p.37.

90 Ibid. p.38.

91 *The Christian Leader*, (January 21 and 28,1897). See *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (February 1,1897) pp.34-35.

92 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (March 1,1897) pp.65-66.

sense of euphoria evaporated with the news that the Free Church's attendance had not kept pace with the rate of population increase. Attendance at Wesleyan Methodist, Episcopalian and Roman Catholic churches had grown faster in Glasgow than that of the Free Church's.[93] The success of the Episcopalian Church in Scotland between 1877 and 1914 was a good example of what an aggressive Church could achieve. During that period, the Episcopalian Church's membership almost trebled in Scotland. This was largely a result of the Church's aggressive work among the urban working class, particularly in Irish and English communities.[94] The Episcopalian Church concentrated on mission work rather than church building, but Howie concluded from *The Christian Leader's* census that church attendance was related to progress in church building. If the Free Church had only doubled its number of churches over the previous fifteen years, Howie argued that its membership would have doubled like the Baptists.[95] On the day the census was undertaken, it appeared that 171 out of every 1,000 people in the city attended church: which was a far cry from the 625 people in every 1,000 who Thomas Chalmers felt should be churchgoers. When *The Daily Mail* had undertaken a similar census in 1876, it discovered that 191 out of every 1,000 people in Glasgow attended church. The Census of Worship and Education in 1851 had revealed that 239 people in every 1,000 went to church.[96] Thus, there did appear to have been a rather dramatic fall in churchgoing in the city over the previous forty-five years. Howie felt that a third of the population should attend church, and from the census he calculated that 411,275 people in Glasgow's population of 843,602 had absolutely no interest in spiritual matters.[97] This situation appeared unsatisfactory at a time when the city's population was

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93 Ibid.

94 C.G. Brown, 'Religion, Class and Church Growth', in W.H. Fraser and R.J. Morris (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland vol ii 1830-1914* (Edinburgh,1990), p.318.

95 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (March 1,1897) pp.65-66.

96 Ibid., (February 1,1897) pp.34-35.

97 Ibid.

increasing by 11,000 a year.[98]

The movement of people to the new housing districts on the city's periphery was one of the biggest problems the Free Church encountered in the late nineteenth century. Given the Free Church's poor representation in Glasgow's suburbs, there was a danger that former Free Church members would join other denominations once they settled in an area where there was no Free church. The city's impressive rail network had given people greater mobility, but Hugh Black, minister at Edinburgh St. George's, urged people to realise "that when they had miles upon miles of city territory they would not get people to walk to Free Churches in the centre of the town. It was absurd to expect them to do it."[99]

The Christian Leader's census seemed to confirm that churchgoing was falling fastest in the city's wealthiest and generally suburban districts which merely added to the Free Church's concern for these areas.[100] Any discussion about non-churchgoing should never overlook the possibility that lapsing was the result of a conscientious decision. This was a view which few ministers entertained however. Instead, many Free Church ministers were convinced that it was the lack of churches in suburban areas which was the decisive factor in encouraging people to lapse. In turn, the demand for churches in suburban areas threatened to make the Glasgow Church Building Society's work even more problematic. If most of the churches were needed in suburban areas the Society would need to spend a large percentage of its money in purchasing sites where land was at a premium. This factor, combined with the revival in the economy's fortunes, meant that it would be difficult for the Society to exploit to the full the money it raised.

The suburban district of Linthouse in the parish of Govan provided a good

98 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1897) Appendix iii p.24.

99 Ibid. p.151.

100 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (March 1,1897) pp.65-66.

example of how suburban areas had been allowed to develop over the previous twenty years without adequate church building taking place to provide for its population increase.[101] In 1871, the district of Linthouse had contained only 30,000 people, but by 1886 this had risen to 90,000. In 1871, there had been only one Free church with 600 members in the area. By 31 December 1896 the Free Church's presence in Linthouse had risen to seven churches with 4,839 members and a mission at Pollockshields with 205 members.[102] It was quite clear, however, that the Free Church could not hope to make any impact upon the area's inhabitants if it could only offer one church for every 12,891 people. To be sure, Robert Howie's St. Mary's Free church was situated in Govan and so he had a vested interest in the area. The area was also home to John Macleod's Govan parish church and his congregation had undertaken extensive mission work throughout the district. From the outset Howie had stressed that the Glasgow Church Building Society was not a sectarian organisation and would welcome the involvement of other denominations. Therefore, Howie wrote to Macleod in 1898 to tell him that his St. Mary's church planned to erect a church in Linthouse. In reply, Macleod wrote that he could see little point in building another Free church when the Established Church had already made plans to build churches in the area. In fact, the Established Church only provided one church for every 11,000 people in the area, so Macleod's objections were hardly reasonable. Having worked in the area for a number of years, Howie felt that there was sufficient room for both denominations. The Glasgow Church Building Society went ahead with its plan to build a church in 1898 which would hold 1,000 people at a cost of £7,000.[103]

Between 2 March 1895 and 23 October 1900, the Glasgow Church Building Society had managed to raise £35,942 for church building, while those congregations which received grants had raised another £37,500. Moreover,

101 Ibid., (November 1,1898) p.269.
102 Ibid., (January 1,1898) pp.8-9.
103 Ibid., (November 1,1898) pp.269-270.

£40,000 had been raised by existing congregations for the rebuilding of old churches.[104] This money had enabled the Society to help build seven new churches - Queens Cross, Stevenson Memorial, Linthouse, Alexandra Park, Broomhill, Cathcart and Shawland. In December 1890, the Society sanctioned grants for new churches in Bridgeton, Scotstoun, Tollcross Park and West Partick. This meant that the Society had given grants to aid in the erection of twelve new churches in Glasgow. Further, new buildings had been built for the Westbourne congregation at Ruchill Street and for the West Scotland Street congregation although neither of these new churches received grants from the Society.[105] In light of the state of the economy in the years before the Building Society was formed and the uncertainty over the Free Church's future, it did seem that people were willing to contribute to another church-extension programme, particularly if it was to be followed by aggressive territorialism.

As we have seen, periods of enthusiasm for church-extension programmes were rarely restricted to one denomination. Instead, when one Church began a church-extension campaign it encouraged others to do the same. It was not entirely surprising, therefore, that the Free Church's church-extension effort led to similar developments in the Church of Scotland. It was certainly important that the Church of Scotland reaffirmed its commitment to home-mission work if it was to maintain the progress which had been made between 1860-1890. In the thirty years after the Disruption, the Free Church had led the way in home-mission work in Scotland. Even John Sloan, the convener of the Free Church's Home Mission Committee, was forced to admit in the 1890s that "their partners in the other ship, the Established Church of Scotland, had gained a good degree, and stood now in the Home Mission department of the Church's work well to the front in the land."[106] The Church of Scotland's commitment to territorialism had been motivated as much by a desire to reassert the value of a

104 Ibid., (December,1900) p.284.

105 Ibid.

106 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1895) p.44.

national Church in the face of a disestablishment campaign as by the conversion of souls. In the 1890s, disestablishment no longer carried the same threat and so there was a distinct possibility that home-mission work would be placed on the back burner. Donald Macleod delivered a speech to the Assembly in 1893 during which he complained about the lack of interest in the Church of Scotland for home-mission matters.[107] While the Established Church's Home Mission Committee had been looking to raise £18,000 with which to undertake its operations, it had been forced to make do with £9,000.[108] Falling contributions to Home Mission Committees were one of the first signs of declining interest in home-mission work and a complaint which was often expressed by the Free Church's Home Mission Committee. Macleod also doubted that the Church should place too much faith in many of the latest fashionable techniques which were a feature of home-mission work in the last quarter of the century. In 1893, the Church of Scotland had attempted to provide amusement for the working class in the east end of Glasgow by renting the East End Exhibition Building and employed the London Band for entertainment, in what proved to be a well-meaning but fruitless attempt to provide the working class with wholesome recreation. Despite the small entrance fee, the meeting was not well attended. This, in turn, convinced Macleod that people were only willing to attend such a gathering if it was free.[109] No doubt the mission's organisers introduced the scheme with the best of intentions, but its failure confirmed Macleod's worst fear that the country was becoming increasingly divided along class lines.

> I am sorry to say that what occurred has made me fear that the gulf which separates class from class in our great centres of industry is wider, and the class feeling deeper, than we had dreamed. I fear that the very name of our Association as being for the Social Improvement of the People gave offence, and that inference, on the part of those who are called 'the upper classes' is resented.[110]

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107 D. Macleod, *Our Home Mission* (Edinburgh,1893).

108 Ibid., p.3.

109 Ibid., p.12.

110 Ibid.

Having witnessed the failure of this programme, Macleod was convinced that the territorial system remained the Church's best hope of reaching those outwith the Church. It was only to be expected, therefore, that Macleod would react angrily to suggestions from Walter Smith, the Moderator of the Free Church General Assembly in 1893, that the endowed territorial system should be abolished.[111] In reply, Macleod claimed that Chalmers had proved entirely accurate when he predicted that Voluntary churches would become clubs for the wealthy.[112] It was fortunate for Macleod that there were others in the Church of Scotland who shared his faith in the territorial ideal and his desire to see the Church of Scotland undertake another spate of church building. The situation in the capital showed how the Established Church needed another church building programme. The Church of Scotland had not undertaken a church-extension campaign in the Presbytery of Edinburgh since the mid-1870s when a total of nine new churches had been erected.[113] In general, most of these churches were built in rapidly expanding middle-class districts and before long many of them became some of the Church of Scotland's healthiest churches. Despite the success of most of these congregations the Church of Scotland had failed to keep pace with the rate of population movement to the suburbs. During an investigation into church provision in Edinburgh, the Presbytery of Edinburgh discovered that the Established Church provided fourteen of the thirty-four Presbyterian churches in the city's Old Town.[114] As far as the presbytery was concerned, this demonstrated that the Established Church, unlike Voluntary Churches, had not deserted the poorest areas in order to follow the wealthy middle class to the suburbs.[115] Unlike Voluntary Churches, the Church of Scotland required an Act

111 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1893) pp.3-17 and pp.273-282.

112 D. Macleod, *Our Home Mission*, pp.15-16.

113 *The Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Missionary Record*, (January 1,1896) p.16.

114 Ibid., (February 1,1896) p.39.

115 Ibid.

of Parliament to remove churches, which served to prevent the Church of Scotland from deserting an area. The Church of Scotland may have remained loyal to the poorest areas in Edinburgh, but it was also apparent that the Church was not well represented throughout the city. In total, the Church of Scotland could boast forty churches throughout Edinburgh, while the Free and United Presbyterian Churches had a combined total of eighty-two churches.[116] When the Free and United Presbyterian Churches finally completed their union it was likely that a number of congregations which were within close proximity of one another would amalgamate. Even after the post-union Church had rid itself of unnecessary churches, it seemed that the Church of Scotland would be responsible for providing fewer churches in the capital than the new Church. Of course, the question of which denomination provided the most churches was only half the story. Whereas Free and United Presbyterian churches in Edinburgh had an average membership of 600, each Church of Scotland congregation in the city had 1,100 members.[117] Given the choice, any Church would prefer to have members in the capital rather than a plethora of half-empty church buildings, but if these statistics were reliable then it appeared that a post-union Church would have 49,200 members in the capital compared to the Established Church's 44,000 members. Although the post-union Church would no doubt lose a number of members, the Established Church's Presbytery of Edinburgh was convinced that it needed to increase its supply of churches in the city. Therefore, in 1895, the presbytery decided to build five new churches in the city at a cost of £20,000.[118] In contrast to the church-extension programme in the 1870s, the church building campaign in the 1890s looked to build churches where the labour aristocracy had settled to the west and east of the city.

Similarly, the Church of Scotland decided to follow the Free Church's example by beginning another church-extension campaign in Glasgow. It was

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid.

118 Ibid.

perhaps an indication of a lack of interest in religion in the 1880s that only the Barony and Govan parish churches held a daily service in Glasgow.[119] Despite the apparent indifference towards church attendance, however, the Established Church's Presbytery of Glasgow decided that twenty-two areas required either churches or mission halls.[120]

As we saw in chapter six, when people who lived in the Old Town areas of the largest cities decided to relocate in new suburban districts, it left the congregations which remained in city centre areas in a difficult position. More often than not, it was the wealthiest members of the community who had the wherewithal to move to suburban areas and commute back into town by using the increasingly efficient transport systems. While middle-class money enabled new congregations to build churches quickly in the suburbs, there was a danger that congregations left in Old Town areas would cease to be self-supporting. Middle-class population movement to the suburbs had been a feature of urban life throughout the nineteenth century, but it gathered pace as the century drew to a close. Likewise, large sections of the labour aristocracy were in a position to move to the suburbs. For many within the Free Church, city-centre congregations seemed doomed to dependence on other congregations for their financial survival. As Alexander C. Mackenzie, the former convener of the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals, wrote in 1896, "The central congregations in the large towns and cities are by almost desperate efforts just holding their own, and no amount of lashing the horses will pull them out of the difficulty and make them efficient for the long and steady pull which aggressive work demands. They could not if they would, and it grieves one to say that generally they would not if they could."[121] Rather than waste money supporting weak city-centre congregations, Mackenzie argued that the Free Church should close down churches in depopulated areas or in areas where they

119 Ibid., (March 2,1896) p.25.

120 Ibid., (May 1,1896) pp.131-132.

121 *The Free Church of Scotland Record*, (May 1,1896) p.120.

were poorly supported. New church building could then take place in the suburbs without overburdening the Sustentation Fund.[122] Of course, there was no need to have an abundance of churches if the population had moved elsewhere. Nevertheless, any attempt to close down city-centre churches was a hazardous policy to implement without leaving those who lived in city-centre areas disadvantaged. The question of what to do with city-centre congregations placed the Free Church in a very difficult position. The Free Church's financial security depended upon the support of the affluent middle class. It could not afford to overlook their needs by maintaining churches in poor areas which only survived because wealthier congregations subsidised their ministers' salaries. However, closing down city-centre congregations to allow church building in the suburbs was likely to isolate the poorest sections in society even further from the Church and would generate unfavourable publicity. These were precisely the people whom the Free Church had been trying to attract to the Church by its home-mission programme of the last fifty years. It would be a very public admission of defeat if the Free Church were to close down churches in the poorer districts in order to follow middle-class population movement to the suburbs. It would also confirm the impression that the Church had become essentially Voluntary.

Although a number of city-centre churches were closed down to make way for church building in the suburbs, the Home Mission Committee was uncomfortable with this practice, particularly after Robert Howie had taken over the Committee's convenership. Rather than close down congregations which had fallen on hard times, the Committee decided to attempt to get them back on their feet again. First, the Committee had to provide them with some form of subsidy. Consequently, the Committee introduced resuscitation grants to existing congregations whose membership had declined. Experience had shown that many of the problems which these congregations experienced were linked to the

122 Ibid.

fact that their ministers were too old to conduct aggressive mission work. In general, few ministers of poor congregations could afford to retire, as their congregations were unable to provide them with a retirement allowance. The Home Mission Committee hoped that congregations which received resuscitation grants would be enabled to employ the services of younger ministers with the energy and enthusiasm for mission work.[123] It was not long before this policy proved a resounding success. Over the years, the membership at the Chalmers' church in Glasgow had declined dramatically largely because of population movement to the suburbs and so the Presbytery of Glasgow decided that it had no option but to suppress the charge. The Home Mission Committee threw the church a lifeline, however, providing the congregation with an annual grant of £100 for three years. By 1897 the congregation could boast 692 members. The success of the Chalmers' church was mirrored at the Cunningham and Rose Street churches.[124]

The fortunes of these congregations once they were in the hands of aggressive, evangelistic ministers vindicated the Home Mission Committee's policy. Moreover, as many of the ministers at congregations receiving resuscitation grants worked their area on the territorial principle, it showed that the territorial system was still relevant to Scotland in the last decade of the nineteenth century. When declining congregations received financial help from the Home Mission Committee, in order to conduct territorial work among the local population, they proved to be some of the healthiest congregations in the Church. Between 1881 and 1896, the Scottish population had increased by 11.6%. During the same period, the Free Church's total membership had increased by 14.3%.[125] According to Robert Howie, most of the Free Church's increase in membership had taken place in congregations which received money from the

123 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1899) p.77 and (1897) Appendix iii p.19.

124 Ibid., (1897) Appendix iii p.19.

125 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (December 1,1896) p.30.

Home Mission Committee. Whereas the Free Church's total membership had risen by 35,459 between 1881-1896 - 27,421 or 77.3% - of this increase had taken place in the 319 congregations which received grants from the Home Mission Committee.[126] In addition, average membership of Home Mission Committee aided congregations had increased from 309 to 363 in the previous fifteen years, whereas membership of non-aided congregations had increased from 209 to 217. In total, 44.8% of congregations which did not receive home-mission grants had seen their membership decline while only 27.6% of congregations which received grants from the Home Mission Committee had seen their membership decline.[127] The progress of congregations which received financial help from the Home Mission Committee was quite remarkable given that they were often situated in poor and depopulated areas. Many of these congregations had previously benefited from the Sustentation Fund, but had been removed and placed under the Home Mission Committee's auspices because they had failed to contribute enough money to the central fund.[128] At a time when it was generally acknowledged that churchgoing had declined it did seem that aggressive territorialism was capable of awakening enthusiasm for spiritual matters in areas where it had previously been dormant.

The startling success of congregations which received resuscitation grants encouraged the Home Mission Committee to look at how it could increase the amount of money given to territorial congregations. Dwindling contributions to the Home Mission Committee's annual collection threatened to wreck this plan however. In 1897, grants to territorial congregations were only worth a quarter of what they had been fifty years before. Nevertheless, the General Assembly approved the Home Mission Committee's proposal in 1897 for an increased

126 Ibid.
127 Ibid.
128 Ibid.

expenditure in excess of £1,400 in the large towns.[129] It was one thing to sanction increased expenditure on territorial congregations, but there was no guarantee that Church members would provide the money to finance a new departure in territorialism. In 1899, the Home Mission Committee's collection raised only £2,210. In contrast, the collection in 1875 had raised £3,475 at a time when the Church had 60,000 fewer members and when Scotland contained 710,000 less people than it did in the late 1890s.[130] Despite evidence to the contrary the Home Mission Committee refused to concede that people in the Free Church were not committed to yet another home-mission programme. "The committee cannot believe that this decrease is due to a waning interest in the work of ingathering. If that were the case, it would show a deplorable want of appreciation of the religious condition of many parts of the country, and a serious decay in that home mission enthusiasm which characterized the Free Church in the earlier days of her history."[131] The lack of money which the Home Mission Committee received through its collections would have been less disappointing if the success of congregations which received territorial and resuscitation grants had not been so notable. Between the Assemblies of 1898 and 1899 the six congregations which received resuscitation grants in Edinburgh and Glasgow had seen their membership rise by 407.[132] Overall, the twelve congregations in Edinburgh and Glasgow which had received territorial and resuscitation grants saw their membership increase by 714 in the year before the Assembly in 1899. The success of these twelve congregations in Edinburgh and Glasgow accounted for almost a quarter of the Free Church's total membership increase of 2,895. Moreover, it was almost half of the 1,537 membership increase in the 189 congregations which received grants from the Home Mission

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129 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1897) Appendix iii p.23.

130 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (March 1,1900) p.53.

131 Ibid.

132 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1897) p.77.

Committee.[133] No congregation in Aberdeen had applied for a resuscitation grant, but the Presbytery of Aberdeen had taken steps to revive several congregations in the east end of the city by raising £5,000 in order to provide them with better buildings.[134] Similarly, in the year before August 1898, the 192 congregations which received help from the Home Mission Committee, including resuscitation and territorial grants, had seen their membership rise by 1,892, or an average 9.5% in each congregation. In contrast, the 1,000 congregations in the Free Church which did not receive help had only seen their membership increase by 1,363 or 1.3% per congregation.[135] The success of aggressive missionary congregations was there for all to see, but it was regretted "that the net increase would have been much greater if there had not been an almost complete cessation of the work of planting new territorial charges in large towns."[136]

In 1898, Professor George Adam Smith asked the Free Church General Assembly whether it could investigate the subject of new methods in the home-mission field. It had been only two years since the Special and Representative Commission on Home Mission Work had reported, but it made sense for the Free Church to look at how it conducted its home-mission work given its imminent union with the United Presbyterian Church. When it reported to the Assembly in 1900, the Sub-Committee on New Methods felt that the money the Free Church had spent on congregational missions would provide greater returns in the future if it was spent promoting territorial churches.[137] It was the endorsement of the territorial principle which formed the backbone of the Sub-Committee on New Methods report. The Sub-Committee was at pains to "emphasise their belief in the territorial system according to which congregations

133 Ibid., Appendix iii p.10.

134 Ibid., p.14.

135 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, (August 1,1898) p.196.

136 Ibid.

137 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1900) Appendix iii pp.119-120.

under ordained ministers have definite districts allotted to them, and house-to-house visitation is regularly and faithfully conducted."[138] Although the Sub-Committee recognised "the indispensableness of the territorial system, *when thoroughly worked,*" it did feel that improvements could be made to make the scheme more effective.[139] In particular, the Sub-Committee maintained that the Church should make greater use of women in its voluntary agencies. This suggestion was largely inspired by the belief that women often received a hearing in contexts which were difficult for men.[140] The Sub-Committee also felt that territorial missions would achieve greater results if rich congregations served as 'parents' to the mission stations.[141] As we have seen, the Fountainbridge territorial mission's relationship with the St George's church had shown how successfully this plan could work. Rich congregations were able to provide the money to prevent missions from failing in the first difficult years, but there was also a danger that such a relationship could create 'pauper' congregations. When properly worked, this kind of relationship could encourage cooperation between different social groups, as had been Chalmers' original aim for home mission. The fact that so few suggestions were made to improve the territorial method showed how the plan had an enduring appeal which it did not seem necessary to change.

While the Sub-Committee on New Methods considered whether the United Free Church required new forms of home-mission, the Home Mission Committee looked at how the new Church should approach church extension. Robert Howie was still convener of the Committee, enabling him to ensure that the new Church would not overlook church extension. The Committee accepted that a number of congregations would have to amalgamate, particularly in thinly

138 Ibid., p.119.
139 Ibid.
140 Ibid., p.120.
141 Ibid.

populated areas which were considered to be overchurched.[142] Despite the fact that the Free Church had built thirteen new churches in Glasgow and the United Presbyterian Church had built six new churches between 1895 and 1900, a total of fourteen Free and United Presbyterian churches amalgamated in Glasgow only months after the union.[143] On the whole, the Committee felt that the United Free Church would be wiser to follow the United Presbyterian Church's approach to church extension rather than the Free Church's.[144] Although the Free Church did not adopt the parish unit of administration after the Disruption the denomination had built churches throughout the country even if it was not financially viable. In contrast, the United Presbyterian Church had concentrated on those areas where it had sufficient support to maintain a charge, particularly in its heartlands in Stirling, Fife, the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, Glasgow and the west of Scotland. Like the Free Church, the United Presbyterian Church had tried to provide new churches in areas where population increase had exhausted the existing church accommodation.[145] Consequently, the Committee felt that the United Free Church would have to undertake fresh church-extension campaigns in the suburban areas of the largest towns and in other rapidly expanding areas such as mining districts.[146] The Committee calculated that the United Free Church would need to build fifty-eight new churches in the eight largest towns if it was to reach the same ratio of churches to people which the Free and United Presbyterian Churches could boast in 1879. This meant that the United Free Church would need to build thirty-four new churches in Glasgow, fourteen in Edinburgh and Leith, three in Dundee, nine in Aberdeen, two in Paisley and suppress three congregations in Greenock and one in Perth.[147]

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142 Ibid., p.30.

143 C.G. Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (London,1987), pp.178-179.

144 *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*, (1900) Appendix iii p.30.

145 Ibid., pp.30-32.

146 Ibid., p.30.

147 Ibid., p.32.

It remained to be seen, however, whether the United Presbyterian element which made up the new Church would accept this level of church building as essential.

Conclusion

If it had not been for Robert Howie it is likely that the Free Church's contribution to home-mission work and church extension would have been negligible during the 1890s. While Howie's arguments were by no means faultless, he did bring a fresh and statistically based approach to the question of church extension and home evangelization, which was in stark contrast to the haphazard approach which had dominated previously. By comparing the rate of church building in rural areas with the level of church building in urban centres over the previous twenty years, Howie was able to show how the Free Church had made insufficient provision for the growing towns in the central belt. By showing what he believed to be the direct link between church building and the growth in a Church's membership, Howie also persuaded many people that the Free Church's survival required a fresh period of church extension and a renewed commitment to home-mission work.

In fact, Howie's campaigning led to the appointment of a Special and Representative Commission on Home Mission Work in 1893 which was charged with responsibility for investigating all aspects of how the Free Church conducted its home-mission programme. When the Commission reported to the Assembly in 1896, it was perhaps not surprising that it condemned the congregational mission method of operating. Since they were introduced in 1868, congregational missions had grown in number and had subsequently claimed an increasing proportion of the Home Mission Committee's funds. This would have been understandable if they had undertaken genuine mission work among those outwith the Church, but experience had shown that they tended to

concentrate on existing Free Church adherents in areas where it would not be financially viable to build a church. Consequently, congregational missions were a victory for those who saw the Free Church as a gathered Church of true believers. In many ways, this was perhaps appropriate given that the Free Church no longer regarded itself as a national Church - in theory at least - and was edging closer towards union with the United Presbyterian Church. As we have seen, things were rarely as simple as they seemed. To replace the congregational mission plan, the Commission recommended a return to the territorial method of operating which had at least proved to be a success in most of the areas where it had been implemented in the past. Moreover, the Commission accepted Howie's argument that the Free Church needed to undertake new church-extension campaigns primarily in the central belt.

It was not long before church-extension campaigns were being undertaken in the cities and in many of the other large Scottish towns. In general, these new churches were built in expanding suburban districts which had largely been overlooked over the previous twenty years. It may have been wiser if the Free Church had declared a moratorium on church building until its union with the United Presbyterian Church had been completed, thus avoiding the possibility of wasting money by duplicating church provision. But when all the available evidence suggested that non-churchgoing was growing fastest in suburban areas, it was assumed that the Free Church could not afford to waste any more time before adding to its level of church provision. The fact that the Church of Scotland also undertook church-extension campaigns during the 1890s indicated how it also felt that church extension, when followed by aggressive territorialism, could solve the problems which an increasingly urban population presented to the Churches. The Church of Scotland's church-extension campaign was also an attempt to make sure that the Established Church would be relevant in the twentieth century, in the same way, it was felt, that the National Church

had been relevant to the Scottish people since the sixteenth century.

Similarly, the Free Church was also keen to make sure that the new United Free Church would be in a strong position to address the problems of the new century. Therefore, the General Assembly appointed a Sub-Committee of the Home Mission Committee to look at how a future home-mission policy could be conducted. Meanwhile, Howie considered which would be the best way to proceed with a church building campaign. When Howie reported in 1900, he concluded that it would be wiser for the new Church to follow the United Presbyterian Church's approach towards church extension. The United Presbyterian policy had been intended to meet the needs of its adherents, first and foremost, rather than the Free Church's commendable but often impracticable attempt to ensure that the Church was well represented throughout the country even in areas where it was not financially viable to establish a new church. On the other hand, however, the Sub-Committee on New Methods was convinced that the territorial method would be the best way for the new Church to undertake a home-mission programme. In many ways, these two recommendations appeared to be at odds with each other. As we have seen, the success of territorial missions generally depended upon building churches which often had more accommodation than required and which were unlikely to be self-supporting in their first few years at the very least. These recommendations merely reflected the contradictions and divisions which had been an integral feature of the Free Church since it was formed in 1843 - divisions between those who saw the Free Church as the true Established Church and those who regarded it as a gathered Church. Divisions between the Highland and Lowland sections of the Church. Divisions between those who welcomed Moody and Sankey and those who saw them as a danger to the traditions of Scottish Presbyterianism. Divisions between those who supported disestablishment and those who wanted to maintain the connection between

Church and State. Divisions between those who welcomed innovations in theology and worship and those who felt that the principles established at the Reformation were equally valid in the nineteenth century. That these divisions played such a major role in the Free Church's history was perhaps not surprising. The Church which was formed in 1843 was based on a loose coalition of those who believed in the Church's spiritual independence. After the civil courts refused to acknowledge this principle, the Free Church of Scotland was born and the various groupings were then at liberty to move in different directions. Nevertheless, throughout all this, the territorial plan had been something which most sections within the Free Church of Scotland could unite around. Support for the territorial method varied in strength at different times in the Free Church's history. None the less, it was never dismissed entirely and was regularly reasserted in an attempt to tackle the problems which Churches were faced with by an increasingly urbanised population and industrialised economy. By recommending that the United Free Church should encourage the territorial plan, the Free Church was attempting to ensure that something which had been an integral feature of Scottish society since the sixteenth century would continue to play an important role in the twentieth century.

Conclusion

In 1900, the Free Church finally united with the United Presbyterian Church to form the United Free Church. This union was not without opposition. When the Free Church was formed in 1843 the main issue had been the Church of Scotland's right to independence from State interference in spiritual matters. In 1900, divisions within the Free Church arose over the Church's commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Declaratory Act of 1892 and the renunciation of the Establishment principle which union with the United Presbyterians would involve. Consequently, twenty-seven conservative Free Church ministers did not join the United Free Church and preferred to carry on as the Free Church of Scotland, while claiming that they were the historical and theological descendants of the Church of Scotland which had been formed in 1560. In 1904, the House of Lords declared in favour of the anti-Union minority after they claimed, because of their proximity to the Church's founding beliefs, that they were entitled to the property of the Free Church of Scotland 1843-1900. The 70,000 members who refused to join the United Free Church and who were largely based in the Highlands ensured that traditional Calvinism and the beliefs of the sixteenth-century reformers would continue to be a feature of Scottish society, even if increasingly isolated.[1] The bitter split in 1900, however, could not disguise how much the Free Church of Scotland had achieved during its fifty-seven year existence.

Although the Free Church had never been able to assert its authority as the true, national Established Church in Scotland, or to force the disestablishment of the Church of Scotland, the Church had still been an enormous success in a number of areas. The existence of so many small Protestant Churches was an indication that schism had been a chronic feature of

[1] J.D. Macmillan, 'Free Church of Scotland, post-1900', in N. Cameron (ed.), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh,1993), pp.338-339. See also A. Stewart and J.K. Cameron, *The Free Church of Scotland 1843-1900* (Edinburgh,1910).

Scottish Presbyterianism. There was no guarantee that the Free Church would prove any more successful than other break-away Churches. The Free Church differed from other Protestant Churches which had decided to go it alone, such as the Relief Church, in that it enjoyed wide popular support throughout the country and from a wide variety of social groups. Moreover, while several Churches formed after secession from the Established Church were by their own definition Voluntary, the Free Church claimed that it was the true, national Church of Scotland in principle if not in law. The Free Church's belief in itself as the true Church of Scotland carried a number of obligations. Whereas Dissenting Voluntary Presbyterian Churches could spend what resources they had looking after their own adherents, the Free Church's Establishment mentality meant that it had a duty to duplicate and if possible overtake the Established Church both at home and overseas. It was this attitude which accounted for much of the Free Church's early dynamism as it embarked upon an ambitious policy of establishing a nationwide Church. This ensured that it was indeed a genuine challenger to the Church of Scotland within a very short period of time. The enthusiasm with which the Free Church conducted this campaign showed how strongly emotions had been aroused during the Ten Years' Conflict and how popular the Free Church was among the commercial middle class. With the money raised after the Disruption, the Free Church was able to build hundreds of churches and manses, three divinity colleges, a nationwide system of schools before 1872, introduce a revolutionary way to finance a ministry based upon an equal dividend and also establish a well respected foreign-mission programme.

In the years immediately after the Disruption it was only to be expected that the Free Church would direct its energies to providing for the religious needs of its own adherents. This is not to suggest, however, that ministers were oblivious to the challenges which presented such a threat to the Church in the 'Hungry Forties'. In the 1840s, Scotland, as with the rest of Britain, experienced

the most serious economic crisis to affect the country since industrialisation began, mass political agitation in the form of Chartism, the influx of predominantly Catholic Irish immigrants and a growing concentration of the poor in towns and cities across the central belt. It was clear that Scotland was still a society in transition in terms of how people worked and where they lived, but there was already a feeling amongst ministers that Churches were finding it extremely difficult to maintain their traditional hold over people in the highly mobile atmosphere of large towns and cities. Thomas Chalmers had been one of the first ministers to recognise these problems during his period in Glasgow between 1815 and 1823 and had tried to compensate for the breakdown in the parish system by introducing the kind of aggressive territorial ministry which he had been such a supporter of since his youth in Kilmany in Fife. By this system, an Evangelical minister operated within a well defined territory. In addition to the ministers' exertions, each congregation would develop a large voluntary agency to visit local inhabitants, distribute tracts, conduct sabbath schools, and participate in anything else which would encourage the development of a vibrant working-class congregation drawn from the surrounding area. Chalmers felt that such a system, if implemented throughout the country, could greatly alleviate Scotland's social misery while also enabling the Church to remain relevant in what was in many ways a new environment.

The fact that there was no sudden rush to copy Chalmers' plan, seemed to suggest that not everybody within the Moderate-dominated Established Church felt as strongly as Chalmers did that its problems could be solved by the implementation of aggressive territorialism. Likewise, when the government refused to provide State funding for the Church of Scotland's church-extension campaign in 1838, it effectively put an end to the possibility of the Established Church implementing a nationwide system of parish churches. It was the Evangelical wing of the Church of Scotland which had been the most

enthusiastic to increase its church accommodation and so it was predictable that the Free Church, shortly after the Disruption, began to look at the question of how to ensure that the Church was present among and relevant to a population which increasingly found itself living and working in a new environment.

With the work of laying the foundations for the Free Church dominating the agenda in the first few years after the Disruption, there was a realistic danger that the territorial ideal may have been forgotten if Chalmers had not thrown himself into the work of establishing a territorial congregation at the West Port. Although the mission did not transform the social environment in the West Port in the way which perhaps Chalmers hoped it would, it did succeed in gathering a large congregation which was mostly comprised of residents from the surrounding district. The West Port church's continued progress after Chalmers' death also showed that the success of such an operation did not depend entirely upon his personality. The mission's achievements at a grass-roots level may be difficult to quantify, but crucially, Chalmers did manage to rekindle interest in the territorial ideal and this was perhaps the mission's greatest accomplishment.

The fact that the General Assembly created a separate Committee on Glasgow Evangelization in 1851 was an indication of how impressed the Free Church was with the West Port mission and with the potential of the territorial ideal in general. It was hoped that this Committee would be able to implement the aggressive system in the city which as well as having most benefited from, had also suffered most from industrialisation and urbanisation. In time, most of the stations established in Glasgow developed into large congregations mainly recruited from the surrounding districts. With hindsight, it was at this stage that the Free Church might have been wiser reconsidering just how much the territorial plan could achieve. The aim of producing conversions was not the only reason why the territorial ideal had been introduced to Glasgow. It was also hoped that the scheme could tackle the social and economic problems which had

cast such a shadow over the industrial capital of Scotland. While the programme certainly succeeded in producing individual Christians, it manifestly failed to regenerate the city's social fabric. But rather than look for alternative ways to solve the problems of unemployment, disease, intemperance and poor housing (James Begg's Committee on the State of Working Class Housing notwithstanding), the Free Church simply assumed that territorialism had not been implemented over a wide enough field. There was perhaps a grain of truth in this view, given that the Committee had only been in operation for eight years. It was this kind of thinking which ensured that the territorial ideal was repeatedly advocated as a viable solution to social and religious problems in Scotland throughout the Free Church's history. After the Free Church's experiences in Glasgow, it was evident that Chalmers had been wrong to suggest that each mission could be carried out at a small expenditure. If congregations were to progress then they generally required some form of subsidy, particularly in their first few years, which could provide them with a church building and a salary so they could attract a minister rather than a probationer. After the initial munificence with which the Free Church's members had greeted the Disruption had waned, it seemed that its adherents, particularly the commercial middle class, were reluctant to provide the money required to carry out a successful home-mission campaign. The financial problems which dogged the home-mission movement throughout the Free Church's history were an indictment of the way a Church could get its priorities wrong.

In light of these problems, the revival between 1859-1862 came at an opportune time. Although some ministers had reservations about the kind of unusual behaviour often associated with revivals, the spiritual awakening was generally welcomed as an opportunity to rekindle interest in religion. Many ministers, particularly at territorial congregations, found that they had reason to be thankful for the revival because of the way it had strengthened their role in

the local community. Ministers in urban areas which were influenced by the revival became, with their churches, a focal point for those in the surrounding district in a way which many of their colleagues felt was only possible in rural areas. Of course, the Free Church's existing territorial churches were able to mobilise the large congregational agencies at their disposal to ensure that people were not allowed to fall away from the church having expressed an interest in religion. The Free Church ignored this practical explanation for the success of territorial congregations during the revival and felt instead that God had rewarded territorial congregations during the spiritual awakening for their previous work in areas which had seemed most indifferent to religion and where social problems were most entrenched. Consequently, it was hoped that the revival would provide momentum to the territorial movement. The Free Church was so impressed with what had been achieved between 1859-1862 that it soon began to look forward to the possibility of future revivals.

By also bringing about an unprecedented level of cooperation among Presbyterian Churches, the revival actually encouraged many Free Church ministers and ordinary members to welcome negotiations concerning union with the United Presbyterian Church in 1863. Although union would not be completed for another thirty-seven years it did appear that a large section of the Free Church had turned their backs on the principles upon which the Church had been formed in 1843. The Ten Years' Conflict had been fought over the question of the Established Church's spiritual independence and not on the basis of whether or not there should be an Established Church recognised by law. But now, only twenty years after the Disruption, the Free Church was entering into negotiations with a Voluntary Church which would welcome disestablishment. These discussions also had implications for the Free Church's evangelistic programme. A home-mission campaign was an absolute necessity for a Church which considered itself to be the true Established Church. It was questionable,

however, whether the Free Church needed to make such a strong commitment to those outwith the Church if it regarded itself as a gathered Church of true believers rather than an Established Church. The Free Church's increasingly Voluntary nature was one of the reasons why congregational missions went on to play such a prominent role in the Free Church's home-mission programme even when it was apparent that they catered primarily for existing Free Church adherents rather than trying to reach those outwith the Church. It was indicative of the territorial programme's lasting appeal, however, that the Free Church never fully abandoned its commitment to territorialism even if it did appear to be at odds with its increasingly close relationship with the United Presbyterian Church.

The Moody and Sankey revival during 1873 and 1874 was more intense than its predecessor in the 1860s and it also proved more controversial. Following the success of the earlier revival, most Free Church ministers welcomed Moody and Sankey initially, but it was not long before disenchantment emerged over both their methods and their teaching. From the mid-nineteenth century Calvinism came under increasing attack from religious sceptics and rationalist Biblical scholars in Germany. At a time when many ministers openly expressed alarm at the way that the Church was losing its influence over people, it was easy to argue that the dwindling fortunes of Presbyterianism were linked to its loyalty to what seemed to many a particularly cold and heartless doctrine which repelled rather than attracted people. The mood of theological uncertainty which existed when they arrived in Britain was one of the reasons why Moody and Sankey found people so receptive to their Gospel message which stressed that God's salvation was within the reach of everybody and not solely an elect. Many of the Free Church's ministers and members in the Highlands, however, regarded this as a foreign doctrine which had no place in Scotland. Therefore, Moody and Sankey's visit to Scotland

merely served to exacerbate the internal tensions within the Free Church which had been such an important feature of the Church since it was formed. The impact which Moody and Sankey had upon younger ministers and students was perhaps more important, however, in ensuring that Moody and Sankey's influence would last considerably longer than the length of their stay in the country. Another important factor concerning Moody and Sankey's time in Scotland was the way they actually undermined, albeit inadvertently, the importance of the aggressive territorial method of evangelization. Whereas local ministers had played an important role during the revival between 1859 and 1862, there could be little disagreement over who most people wanted to see during the heady atmosphere of 1873 and 1874. Further, by using large emotional meetings as the cornerstone of their campaign, Moody and Sankey seemed to indicate that there was an alternative way to produce mass conversions which avoided the time or the expense involved by operating along the lines laid down by Chalmers. The success of the large revivalist programme was a major factor in explaining the territorial principles decline in importance within the Free Church over the following twenty years.

Other factors which distracted the Free Church from undertaking aggressive territorialism were its continued negotiations with the United Presbyterian Church concerning union from 1873 and its involvement in a bitter campaign for disestablishment which further damaged the Church's relations with the Church of Scotland. Similarly, the infighting over complex theological issues which characterised the Free Church in this period was not a conducive environment in which to encourage a home-mission programme. This is not to suggest, however, that the territorial plan was forgotten about entirely in Scotland during this period. Instead, while the Free Church placed less emphasis on the importance of a territorial programme, the Established Church made it a linchpin of its Church defence programme. Church of Scotland ministers were

no doubt genuinely concerned about the spiritual welfare of those who were indifferent to church attendance, but they also understood, as James Robertson and the Macleod brothers effectively demonstrated, that a thorough and successful home-mission programme could dismiss the claims of those who argued that the Church of Scotland's Establishment status was unnecessary in an increasingly pluralistic and indeed secular society. In a wider sense, it was also important that the Church of Scotland undertook an unprecedented commitment to looking after the spiritual welfare of those outwith the church at precisely the time that the Free Church's own commitment to territorialism was less evident.

The Church of Scotland's territorial programme was also a wise policy to pursue given the emergence of more active governments in the last quarter of the century. Although increasing intervention from local authorities and central government was long overdue, it threatened to leave Churches with a much reduced role in society. For most of the nineteenth century, ministers had stressed that an individual's material improvement depended upon religious conversion and so it was felt that any improvement to the social fabric of the country at large would only be achieved if the Churches undertook large-scale missionary programmes. Likewise, successive governments had stressed *laissez-faire* and individualistic virtues such as self-help and hard work at the expense of any communal view of society. In the absence of interventionist governments, the Churches had been allowed to play a major role in the provision of what limited social welfare was available and in other areas such as education. The involvement of Churches in these areas meant that they were able to come into contact with and possibly influence people who were outside organised religion. As social problems became more entrenched and concentrated, it was clear that the Churches' efforts were not enough, however well intended they may have been. Individual ministers and Church members

often had to administer public policy even after governments had intervened, most notably in the provision of poor relief and education, but it could not disguise the fact that overall control lay in the hands of politicians who were more likely to be motivated by political expediency rather than spiritual considerations. With the emergence of increasingly active local governments, particularly in Glasgow, it only served to confirm the fact that secular public authorities were the real vehicle of social change and improvement. Church members might dominate Town Councils, but this represented a major shift in direction where social improvement was concerned. The working class were not oblivious to these changes either. Large sections of the working class were given the vote by the Reform Acts which followed the Parliamentary Reform Act in 1832 and this led to the formation of a number of working-class political organisations from 1880. In many cases the socialism of these organisations was based on Christian ethics. Nevertheless, the creation of such organisations was an indication that significant sections of the working class realised that their social and economic improvement depended upon making sure their voice was heard in the corridors of political power rather than upon looking to religious organisations which had become increasingly isolated.

As we have seen, theological controversies, union negotiations, a disestablishment campaign, the influence of socialist working-class groups and the emergence of increasingly active elected authorities all played a part in undermining the Churches' historic role in society. Further, they distracted the Free Church in particular from realising how important it was to conduct a far-reaching home-mission programme. The theological, union and disestablishment questions would have to be addressed sooner or later. It was, nevertheless, unfortunate that the Free Church did not realise that such a turbulent environment meant that it was even more important that the Church reaffirmed its commitment to looking after the spiritual welfare of those who

did not attend church, particularly when the State had taken over in a number of other areas where people in the past would have come into contact with organised religion. By neglecting such important areas as church building and mission work, the Free Church only succeeded in distancing itself from ordinary people: a potentially disastrous policy for any Church to follow.

It was not until the 1890s and Robert Howie's emergence as the Free Church's leading spokesman on home-mission matters that the Free Church began to revise its policy of the previous twenty years. By showing how the Free Church had neglected church building and mission work, Howie was able to argue with vast statistical data that the Church had overlooked continued population movement to the central belt where the problems of non-churchgoing and social misery were most acute. Howie had been a territorial missionary in Glasgow when the Wynd mission was at its most productive and so it was perhaps not surprising that he remained loyal to the territorial method and the importance of church building. It was largely because of Howie's efforts and the Free Church's imminent union with the United Presbyterian Church, that the denomination undertook new church-extension campaigns in the 1890s which it was hoped would help to make up for the shortfall in churches which had arisen in the large centres of population over the previous twenty years. Furthermore, in the 1890s, the Free Church renewed its commitment to the territorial ideal, having finally reached the conclusion that congregational missions had been of little value in an evangelical sense and often a waste of what little money was available to those looking to undertake home-mission work. On the brink of union and a new century, the Free Church was determined that the territorial ideal would be an important feature of the United Free Church.

As we have seen, the territorial plan, as developed by John Knox and introduced in an amended form by Thomas Chalmers in the nineteenth century,

had enjoyed an enduring popularity whose appeal never disappeared entirely even if it did vary in strength throughout the Free Church's history. It soon became evident after the Disruption that it was not only the Free Church which was infatuated with the territorial ideal. In fact, it is quite astonishing that so few alternatives were advocated as methods of evangelization. In what was often a period of traumatic change, the territorial plan harked back to a golden age in Scotland's history which was as romanticised as it was unattainable. Admittedly, the territorial plan had failed to regenerate society, but the much trumpeted new Poor Law had also failed to achieve that distinction. Similarly, greater government intervention had only made a small inroad into alleviating social problems. Socialists would argue that government intervention had not gone far enough in the same way that advocates of aggressive mission work had constantly felt that the territorial system had not been implemented extensively enough to truly affect the country's social fabric. It is safe to say, however, that many thousands of lives were transformed by their contact and participation with a territorial mission.

Industrialisation had brought untold riches to Britain and urbanisation had introduced a new way of living for more and more people. The worse side effects of industrialisation and urbanisation had been disastrous, however, particularly to those who already lived on the margins of society. Given the nature of the forces at work in society in the nineteenth century, there was never any real possibility that the problems connected with urbanisation and industrialisation would be solved by a system of territorial churches regardless of how widely they were implemented. Territorial congregations could encourage thrift through savings banks, education through evening classes and sobriety through temperance societies, but there was nothing that even the most successful territorial congregation could do to protect people from the devastating consequences of an economic collapse, the miseries of poor housing

or the effects of a contagious disease. Before 1880, it is not difficult to understand why ministers could not see beyond the territorial system as a means of social improvement. Ministers in the nineteenth century have often been criticised for not having a more enlightened attitude to social problems and because of their devotion to the principle of competitive individualism. This does not explain, however, why experts on social matters should emerge from the ranks of ministers when they were so marked by their absence in other areas.

The complex question of whether or not secularisation began in the nineteenth century is one which has preoccupied ecclesiastical historians in the twentieth century. Recent research has questioned the long prevailing wisdom that secularisation began in the nineteenth century.[2] It was ministers more than anybody else who continually complained whether in speeches, books or pamphlets about how difficult it was to reach vast sections of the population. But their assumptions as to what were acceptable levels of churchgoing are part of the problems faced by historians when trying to evaluate interest in religion during the nineteenth century. Thomas Chalmers, for example, felt that between 58-65% of the population should be churchgoers. Other ministers, if not quite as optimistic as Chalmers, also had high expectations as to what were acceptable levels of churchgoing. It was perhaps not surprising, therefore, that ministers

2 Anybody interested in following this debate in closer detail should look at C.G. Brown's, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (London,1987); *Religion and Society in Scotland since 1707* (Edinburgh,1997); 'Did Urbanisation Secularise Britain', *Urban History Yearbook* (1988), pp.1-14; 'The Cost of Pew-renting: Church Management, Churchgoing and Social Class in Nineteenth-Century Glasgow', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, xxxviii (1987), pp.347-361; 'Religion, Class and Church Growth', in W.H. Fraser and R.J. Morris (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland volume ii 1830-1914* (Edinburgh,1990), pp.310-335; A.C. Cheyne, *The Transforming of the Kirk: Victorian Scotland's Religious Revolution* (Edinburgh,1993); D.C. Smith, *Passive Obedience and Prophetic Protest: Social Criticism in the Scottish Church 1830-1945* (New York,1987); T.C. Smout's chapter on 'Churchgoing', in his *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (London,1986); S. Mechie, *The Church and Scottish Social Development 1780-1870* (London,1960); D.J. Withrington's 'The Churches in Scotland c.1870--c.1900: Towards a New Social Conscience?', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xix (1977), pp.155-168; 'Non-Church-going, c.1750--c.1850: A Preliminary Study', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xvii (1972), pp.99-113; A.D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change 1740-1914* (London,1976); S.J.D. Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline: Organisation and Experience in Industrial Yorkshire 1870-1920* (Cambridge,1996); J.N. Morris, *Religion and Urban Change: Croydon, 1840-1914* (Woodbridge,1992); H. Macleod, *Religion and the Working Class in Nineteenth-century Britain* (London,1984).

were quick to use anxious language when they looked upon the concentration of people and social decay which characterised the large centres of population. When compared to the levels of church attendance and church membership in the second half of the twentieth century, it would appear that Scots were regular churchgoers in the nineteenth century even if ministers were conscious of a greater secular mood. But just as industrialisation and urbanisation did not appear overnight, any alienation which people felt towards organised religion was a slow process where the effects could only be seen gradually. Even if churchgoing did decline in the nineteenth century, religious influences did manifest themselves elsewhere. Ordinary people who did not attend church could still find their leisure time guided by religious organisations and other aspects of their lives governed by public bodies whose members were often ministers, elders and enthusiastic church members. This was also true of territorial congregations and the vast array of facilities and activities they offered to people who had no inclination to attend church.

Most historians now agree that Churches grew before 1880 and that churchgoing began to decline from that decade. As we have seen, the largest Presbyterian Churches in Scotland were all responsible for extensive home-mission campaigns before 1880 and it was the territorial ideal which was at the centre of those campaigns. Whereas ordinary, attractive churches did not have the voluntary workers or congregational agencies to attract non-churchgoers, territorial congregations were able to mobilise their vast numbers of willing workers to visit and encourage non-churchgoers to attend their local territorial church or mission. This also explains why territorial congregations were so successful during the revivals between 1859-1862 and 1873-1874. While ordinary congregations were unable to take full advantage of a renewed interest in religion, territorial congregations had the means at their disposal to make sure that people who had expressed an interest in religion were not allowed to return

to their former indifference. It was also the reason why the territorial plan was superior to the large evangelical meetings which became popular after Moody and Sankey left the country in 1874. Churches should welcome any genuine evidence of God's Spirit, but it must be said that revivals and large emotional meetings were by no means a common experience. It was hardly surprising that many people who had been attracted to an ordinary congregation because of a revival or a large meeting drifted away after they realised that the normal church experience lacked the drama and excitement of a spiritual awakening or a large emotional gathering. This was especially true when such congregations did not have any voluntary agency in place to nurture those who had recently joined their church.

After 1880, the commitment of the largest Presbyterian Churches to territorialism became less evident. This did not mean that confidence in what the territorial plan could achieve had evaporated. It simply appeared less important as the Churches became preoccupied with the disestablishment issue, theological controversies and Church union negotiations. At the same time, an expanding State sector began to undermine the wider role of the Church in society. One of the most serious failures of the Churches in the nineteenth century was their inability to realise that the 1880s called for even more extensive home-mission programmes based on the territorial plan. When the Free Church eventually reaffirmed its commitment to territorialism in the 1890s, albeit on a much smaller scale, it was once again clear that territorial congregations were the most successful in terms of adding new recruits to the Church. The history of Church decline in Scotland in the nineteenth century might have been completely different if the Churches had only maintained the level of their territorial missionary programmes after 1880.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the territorial plan had been at the forefront of the Free and Established Churches battle against what they saw

as secularisation and non-churchgoing. The territorial programme's lasting relevance had also shown the Scottish preference for local solutions to local problems. Even the Poor Law Act of 1845 and the Education Act of 1872 had retained much of the parochial administration of poor relief and education. In Scotland, it was felt that the parish system, which retained a sense of local identity and personal contact, could prevent people becoming institutionalised under a bureaucratic and centralised regime. This concentration on the individual but always through a group activity, was the key element of the territorial method which had proved so important to a number of denominations which were trying to make sure their voice was heard in large towns and cities. The success they encountered was striking. Territorialism may not have been a solution to the country's social and economic problems, but it had more than proved its value in terms of helping individual churches to remain relevant in areas of greatest social dislocation and to people who had an unprecedented number of alternatives in which to spend the time when they were not working.

Those who dismiss the territorial ideal would also do well to remember that Chalmers had argued that entire towns and cities should be subdivided and placed under the supervision of territorial missions and this never proved to be the case. It was, therefore, questionable how long territorial missions could maintain their aggressiveness or of what wider benefit they could bring to the community at large - given the level of population mobility in the nineteenth century - if they existed in isolation, surrounded by churches which operated on the attractive principle. Similarly, with improvements in public transport, it was no longer the case that people had to live close to where they worked. Likewise, many people were able to pursue recreational activities far away from their local area which further damaged an individual's attachment to his or her local community. It was clearly not only secularisation which was undermining the

effectiveness of the parish system.

The fact that aggressive churches were generally more successful than their attractive counterparts showed the superiority of Chalmers' programme of evangelization. It was simply unfortunate that more ministers did not decide to follow the territorial method. In addition, none of the ministers who worked tirelessly at building up a thriving territorial congregation would have regarded it as a "sop" to their conscience.[3] Instead, they saw it as a fulfilment of the calling which had attracted them to the ministry in the first place. If only more of their colleagues had felt the same, then the Free Church and other Churches for that matter, may have dealt more effectively with the problems they encountered in the nineteenth century. The problems they experienced in doing so formed the difficult legacy which religious organisations in the twentieth century have inherited. The subsequent failure of Churches in this century has seen levels of church membership and church attendance in Britain continue to decline to the kind of low numbers which would have astounded their nineteenth-century predecessors.

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[3] A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland 1843-1874* (Edinburgh,1975), p.20. Drummond and Bulloch also suggest that Thomas Chalmers, rather than James Begg, was the real "evil genius" of the Free Church. Amongst other things, Chalmers is considered worthy of this title because he "hankered after the intimacy and mutual aid of small communities." A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch, *The Church in Late Victorian Scotland 1874-1900* (Edinburgh,1978), p.128.

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